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FBIS-EEU-96-054 CONTENTS *19 March 1996*

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BULGARIA

Bulgaria: German President Arrives for Official Visit *[Sofia Radio]* 1
Bulgaria: Videnov Chairs European Integration Meeting *[Sofia Radio]* 1
Bulgaria: Commentary Assesses Videnov's Strategy *[SEGA 14-20 Mar]* 1

CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech Republic: UN Owes CR Over $22 Million for Bosnia *[MLADA FRONTA DNES 16 Mar]* 4

SLOVAKIA

Slovakia: Ministry Issues Statement on UN Representative *[Bratislava Radio]* 5
Slovakia: HZDS Claims Daily Publishing 'Falsification' *[NARODNA OBRODA 15 Mar]* 5
Slovakia: Aims of New Territorial Division Examined *[SME 13 Mar]* 5
Slovakia: Daily Rejects Criticism of Antisubversion Law *[SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA 15 Mar]* 7
Slovakia: Economy Minister Views Industrial Trends *[HOSPODARSKE NOVINY 12 Mar]* 8
Slovakia: Rally Marks 'Fascist' State; Support 'Minimal' *[PRAVDA 15 Mar]* 11
Slovakia: Statement Issued on State Anniversary *[NARODNA OBRODA 15 Mar]* 11

HUNGARY

Hungary: Kovacs on Russian Duma, Treaty With Romania *[Budapest Radio]* 12
Hungary: Kovacs Views EU, NATO Integration *[MAGYAR NEMZET 14 Mar]* 12
Hungary: Horn Attacks Remarks by Budapest Mayor *[Budapest Radio]* 16
Hungary: Editorial Condemns FKGP Leader's Speech *[NEPSZABADSAG 16 Mar]* 16
Hungary: Ethnic Hungarians Agree on Media Representation *[Budapest Radio]* 17

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

B-H: Koljevic Assesses Geneva Talks on Bosnia *[Belgrade TV]* 18
B-H: Sarajevo Radio Views Conclusions of Geneva Talks *[Sarajevo Radio]* 18
B-H: Gen Delic on Ankara Conference, Dispute With IFOR *[Sarajevo TV]* 18
B-H: IFOR 'Concerned' by Lifting of Arms Embargo *[AFP]* 19
B-H: Article Views Army Plans, U.S., Turkish Role *[SVIJET 7 Mar]* 20
B-H: U.S. 'Insinuations' on Terrorism Support Criticized *[LJILJAN 13 Mar]* 21
B-H: Iran Denies Existence of Training Camps, Troops *[Sarajevo Radio]* 22
B-H: Commentary Views 'Dilemma' of Iran, U.S. Ties *[OSLOBODJENJE (Bosnian) 6 Mar]* 23
B-H: Sacirbegovic Interviewed on Ties to Iran, FRY *[DNEVNI AVAZ 8, 9 Mar]* 23
B-H: Commentary Views Izetbegovic Role, Absence *[SVIJET 29 Feb]* 25
B-H: Silajdzic Says Dayton Accord 'Collapsing' *[London AL-HAYAH 15 Mar]* 26
B-H: Ganic Demands End to 'Speculation' Over Country *[Sarajevo Radio]* 27
B-H: Abdic's Political Comeback Viewed *[SVIJET 14 Mar]* 28
B-H: OSCE Opens Tuzla Office To Prepare for Elections *[AFP]* 29
B-H: Muslim Troops Remain in Sarajevo Separation Zone *[TANJUG]* 29
B-H: NATO Says Army Agrees To Demilitarize Sarajevo *[AFP]* 30
B-H: Sarajevo, Mostar Authorities Prevent Refugees' Return *[TANJUG]* 30
B-H: EU: Joint Muslim-Croat Patrols Suspended in Mostar *[AFP]* 31

B-H: Croats Threaten To Cut Water Supply in Mostar *[Sarajevo Radio]* 31
B-H: European Police Deny Mostar Patrols Suspended *[Sarajevo Radio]* 32
B-H: Outgoing EU Administrator Views Situation *[Sarajevo TV]* 32
B-H: HDZ Urges Croatian Refugees To Return to Sarajevo *[Sarajevo Radio]* 32
B-H: Croatian Minority Places Conditions for Return *[VECERNJE NOVINE 13 Mar]* 33
B-H: Croatian Defense Council Promotions Announced *[Zagreb Radio]* 33
B-H: Police Chief Denies Accord on Deployment, Uniforms *[Hanau NOVA BOSNA 16 Mar]* 33
B-H: Federal Police Enter Sarajevo Suburb of Grbavica *[Sarajevo Radio]* 34
B-H: Interior Minister: No Problems, Incidents in Grbavica *[Sarajevo Radio]* 34
B-H: Serb Official Warns of Islamization of Sarajevo *[SRNA]* 34
B-H: Croatia Said Using Ploce as 'Political Gambit' *[Sarajevo Radio]* 35
B-H: Krajisnik on Coordinating Bosnian, Serb Constitutions *[Pale TV]* 35
B-H: Federal, Local Serb Representatives on Sarajevo *[Sarajevo Radio]* 36
B-H: Ilidza Serbs Say Situation 'Significantly Improved' *[Sarajevo Radio]* 36
B-H: Sarajevo: Serb Exodus Finally Over *[SRNA]* 37
B-H: Minister on Time, Conditions for Refugees' Return *[Hamburg DER SPIEGEL 18 Mar]* 37
B-H: Commission Examines Human Rights Situation in Vogosca *[Sarajevo Radio]* 37

CROATIA

Croatia: Tudjman Pleased With Talks in Geneva *[Zagreb Radio]* 39
Croatia: Tudjman Discusses Recognition of FRY in Geneva *[Zagreb Radio]* 40
Croatia: FRY Army Withdrawing Units From E. Slavonia *[Zagreb TV]* 40
Croatia: Derycke, Zagreb Officials Debate UNTAES Role *[Brussels LA LIBRE BELGIQUE 14 Mar]* 40
Croatia: Derycke on Ankara Meeting, Future of Slavonia *[Brussels LA LIBRE BELGIQUE 15 Mar]* 41
Croatia: Turkish Air Force Delegation on Cooperation *[Zagreb Radio]* 42
Croatia: Daily on Talks With Serbs, Mutual Recognition *[VJESNIK 13 Mar]* 43
Croatia: Neighborly Relations Seen To Lead to Europe *[VECERNJI LIST 11 Mar]* 44
Croatia: Unions Delay General Strike, Opt for Talks *[AFP]* 47
Croatia: HDZ Right Wing Said Working To Oust Matesa *[Sarajevo Radio]* 47
Croatia: Armed Forces' Appointments, Retirements *[Zagreb TV]* 48

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

FYROM: Italian FM Agnelli Plans Visit to Skopje *[MIC]* 50
FYROM: Envoy Proposes Thessaloniki Trade Office *[Skopje Radio]* 50
FYROM: Commentary Views Changes in Greek Policy *[MIC]* 50
FYROM: New Assembly Chairman Outlines Tasks *[VECER 16-17 Mar]* 51
FYROM: Cokrevski Emphasizes Responsibility of Police *[VECER 18 Mar]* 52

POLAND

Poland: Ministry Issues Protest Over Jakarta Incident *[PAP]* 54
Poland: Warsaw Press Reaction to Primakov Visit *[RZECZPOSPOLITA 16 Mar, etc.]* 54
Poland: More on Kwasniewski Television Interview *[TRYBUNA 18 Mar]* 55
Poland: Foreign Minister Rosati Interviewed *[Warsaw Radio]* 55
Poland: Interior Minister's Aide on UOP, MSW Reform *[POLITYKA 9 Mar]* 58
Poland: Ongoing Reshuffles Within Army Criticized *[WPROST 17 Mar]* 60
Poland: Sejm Passes Law on Foreign Capital *[GAZETA SWIATECZNA 16-17 Mar]* 62
Poland: Minister Kaczmarek Urges Social Insurance Reform *[GAZETA WYBORCZA 14 Mar]* 62
Poland: Gdansk Shipyard Facing Bankruptcy *[Warsaw TV]* 62
Poland: Kolodko: Government Not To Save Gdansk Shipyard *[Warsaw Radio]* 63

ROMANIA

Romania: Melescanu Discusses EU, NATO Integration *[DIMINEATA 7 Mar]* 64

Romania: Daily Sees PNTCD Drawing Closer to PDSR *[AZI 11 Mar]* 66
Romania: Conflict Between UDMR's Marko, Tokes Reported *[ZIUA 11 Mar]* 66
Romania: Deputies Endorse Decision on Parliamentary Budget *[Bucharest Radio]* 67
Romania: Five Banks Banned From Hard-Currency Transactions *[Bucharest Radio]* 67

YUGOSLAVIA

Federal

Federal: Army Gen Kovacevic Calls For 'Powerful Army' *[TANJUG]* 68
Federal: Parliament Official Meets Russian Ambassador *[TANJUG]* 68
Federal: Talks Begin With Hungary on Economic Cooperation *[TANJUG]* 68
Federal: Foreign Investment Termed 'Indispensable' *[TANJUG]* 68

Serbia

Serbia: Milosevic Meets Head of U.S. Negotiating Team *[TANJUG]* 69
Serbia: Party Leaders Discuss Status of Vojvodina *[NIN 26 Jan]* 69

Kosovo

Kosovo: Serbs Detain Human Rights Activist, Seize Evidence *[AFP]* 72

Vojvodina

Vojvodina: Minister on National Minorities' Rights *[TANJUG]* 72

Bulgaria: German President Arrives for Official Visit

AU1903110296 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1000 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] After a break of eight years, a German president is making an official visit to Bulgaria. Several minutes ago, the special aircraft of German President Roman Herzog landed at Sofia Airport.

At this moment at the Boyana Residence, the official ceremony for his arrival is beginning.

The German president is accompanied by ministers, deputies, and businessmen. In the early afternoon there will be a private meeting between Presidents Zhelev and Herzog, which will mark the beginning of the working part of Roman Herzog's visit to Bulgaria.

It is expected that issues of bilateral cooperation, the situation in the Balkans after signing the Dayton agreements, and the possibility of Germany facilitating the more rapid integration of Bulgaria in the European and euro-atlantic structures will be discussed.

At a special ceremony, a Bulgarian-German Cultural Cooperation Agreement will be signed.

This evening, President Roman Herzog will have a meeting with Bulgarian intellectuals in the German Embassy.

Bulgaria: Videnov Chairs European Integration Meeting

AU1803195196 Sofia Khorizont Radio Network in Bulgarian 1700 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Zhan Videnov today chaired a meeting of the Governmental Committee on European Integration, which discussed and approved reports by Foreign Affairs Minister Georgi Pirinski and Defense Minister Dimitur Pavlov on the upcoming intensified dialogue with NATO.

Gancho Ganchev, deputy minister of economic development, briefed the participants on the 6 March Brussels meeting of ministers of economy and finances of the EU and associated countries, which noted Bulgaria's good economic results in 1995.

Mr. Ganchev added that if negotiations with the World Bank and IMF produce good results, Bulgaria could also expect EU assistance.

The meeting also approved a report by Deputy Prime Minister Doncho Konakchiev on the progress of administrative reform, as well as a report by Transportation Minister Stamen Stamenov on the project to construct a new border bridge between Bulgaria and Greece in the Kulata area.

Konstantin Rusev, chairman of the Committee on Power Supply, briefed the participants on the results of the talks between representatives of the committee and the European Commission on Short and Long-Range Prospects of the Bulgarian Power Supply.

The meeting also approved a report by Ministers Mladen Chervenyakov and Lyubomir Nachev on the upcoming Brussels meeting of justice and interior ministers of the EU and associated states from Central and Eastern Europe.

It was pointed out that the attitude toward the visa issue on the part of the EU countries is very important for our country.

Bulgaria will also bring up the question of EU assistance in legislation and information.

Bulgaria: Commentary Assesses Videnov's Strategy

AU1803152096 Sofia SEGA in Bulgarian 14-20 Mar 96 pp 20-21

[Commentary by Andrey Raychev: "Videnov and Blind Kittens"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "It would have been better if the government had admitted its weakness and accepted responsibility for the grain crisis and 'Orion,'" Professor Chavdar Kyuranov said.

Nikolay Kamov, Bulgarian Socialist Party [BSP] spokesman, directly addressed the prime minister by saying: "You must know that those who shout 'Hallelujah!' today will be the first to crucify you tomorrow!"

Later, Aleksandur Marinov, leader of Sofia's Socialists, said that there was no censorship in the BSP, but self-censorship was being taught. He admitted that none of the BSP plenum participants had demanded Videnov's crucifixion, but the reproaches toward the prime minister should be taken as a delicate hint for him to resign.

The prime minister himself closed the scandal by saying: "I think that, among all those who attended the plenum, Andrey Lukanov was the one who seemed to be least blackmailed."

Everything was summarized by Videnov in a tone that left no room for objection: "There are more urgent things than personnel changes. We must work out a program to stabilize agriculture and finances. Afterward, we will direct our attention to the presidential elections. It is parliament that replaces the ministers, while the prime minister replaces other officials in the highranking administration. Thus, I will first implement my commitment that arises from the decision of this meeting."

Klara Marinova and Nikolay Kamov, BSP spokespersons, proposed that the plenum be open to the mass media representatives. This proposal did not meet with the understanding of their fellow party members. The journalists did not even receive a copy of Videnov's report, because the BSP headquarters' copying machine was out of order.

Zhan Videnov did not speak to any journalist, but appeared at the evening news conference fresh and in a good mood. Like a gentleman, he allowed Klara Marinova to sit on his knee until a chair was found for her. [passage omitted]

At the 10 March plenum, the Videnov line was articulated for the first time: Videnov himself did not even hint about any possible compromise or turn. What he said could be summarized in several sentences: If I have made a mistake, then it is the mistake of not being even firmer. There are outside forces that want to destabilize me. They are related to my internal enemies: the perestroyka adherents and the nouveau riche, who became used to stealing and ruling without any responsibility. Both are paying corrupt journalists to write against me.

The essence of the "Videnov line" is that the idea of strengthening the state in our country can only take the form of strengthening personal power. From an all-Balkan point of view there is nothing surprising in this: Iliescu, Milosevic, and Papandreou are ample examples (we can ignore the right-wing models that have been implemented in Croatia, Albania, and Turkey.)

This model ("a strong state equals strong personal power") could be natural for the Balkans, but not for Bulgaria. It has a great internal price:

—First of all, because for six years already Bulgaria has been investing in the opposite model: a liberal society, total personal freedom, and real economic pluralism. To erase this six-year-old investment precisely when half the road has been traversed would be an adventure.

—Second, such a political line could be implemented only through steadily and consistently returning the state to the economy. This is a sure way of turning our country into a Third World state. [passage omitted]

—Third, in asserting such a line, many civic freedoms would inevitably be dismantled or weakened. As Tedi Moskov said, "Freedom for speech, death for the press!" Of course, I am far from thinking that such a political line has more than a 1-percent chance of success. The most probable result will be a fiasco and a shameful one, too.

Nevertheless, this line has a 50-percent chance of being implemented for a while. It is precisely here that the question of the internal cost of the "Videnov experiment" for the BSP arises.

First, Videnov's line will doom the BSP into making a sharp turn to the left because of the following situation: The war against all that he is engaged in will prompt Videnov to rely ever more on the leftist and hardest-line circles of voters. The BSP, which has "controlled" the shares of the nonexistent political center and has successfully cashed them in at every election, will lose its character as a center-left force and will become a radical left-wing party. This will inevitably lead the party to isolation.

Second, the BSP will have to follow the sad example of the Union of Democratic Forces [SDS] in expelling members. "The red expellees" could be a fundamentally new phenomenon, but the cost for the party will be the same. Former SDS leader Filip Dimitrov used to say "How many supporters does Petko Simeonov have? A handful!" Nevertheless, after a series of expulsions, the SDS reached the precipice and almost perished in 1994. The cost of the "red expellees" will be similar.

Third, the BSP will quickly lose its peripheral voters—a capital that it has taken years to accumulate.

Those are the drawbacks in Videnov's line for the BSP and the country.

What are the pluses, i.e., the chances for success?

First of all, there is the fact that Zhan Videnov has decided to follow the line to the end, i.e., that he behaves as a real leader, who bets everything on a single card and burns all his bridges. This is a significant factor.

Second, strengthening the state functions in the economy will produce in the short run a positive, albeit very limited, effect. [passage omitted]

What about Videnov's tactics?

Throughout his entire political career, Videnov has followed two tactical rules: First, do not be the first to attack, but respond like lightning to attacks. Second, get your victories in 300 small fights instead of one major struggle. [passage omitted]

An analogy with the last years of Todor Zhivkov's regime is necessary: Then too there were many blind kittens that simply did not want to see the obvious, namely, that the party course was doomed and that there were only a few months left before total destruction would ensue.

So the question is: How many blind kittens are there now in the BSP?

Czech Republic: UN Owes CR Over $22 Million for Bosnia

AU1803145296 Prague MLADA FRONTA DNES in Czech 16 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by "(mkl)": "The United Nations Owes the State Millions for the Bosnian Peacekeeping Mission"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prague—The United Nations owes the Republic more than $22 million—that is, about 600 million korunas [Kc]—for the costs associated with the Czech troops' involvement in the peacekeeping missions in the former Yugoslavia. This sum is almost nine times the amount the Czech Republic [CR] pays the United Nations as its annual contribution.

"In planning the UNPROFOR [UN Protection Force] and UNCRO [UN Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia] peacekeeping operations, it was envisaged that they would last for 10 years and that the United Nations would pay after their completion. The missions, however, came to an end after four years," said Eva Ticha from the Defense Ministry's press department. "The closing account is being prepared now; it should be concluded by mid-March—that is, after all of the Czech troops involved in the missions have returned," she added. Since the beginning of the year, the UN troops have been replaced by IFOR [Implementation Force] units operating under NATO command, while each state pays the costs of their operation itself.

So far, the global organization has repaid just under $3 million. The United Nations has acknowledged the rest of the debt but cannot pay it at the moment because it is struggling with a prolonged financial crisis.

Petr Fuzak from the Defense Ministry said that the United Nations is now trying to settle its debt at least partially by supplying the building units in which the Czech IFOR troops in Bosnia are housed.

At the same time, the state has paid the United Nations a contribution of $2.5 million—that is, roughly Kc70 million—this year. "It was $1 million more last year. The reduction in the members' contributions is associated with the ongoing reform of this organization. Next year, it should be reduced by a further 0.01 percent, to a sum amounting to 0.25 percent of the UN budget," said Karel Boruvka of the Foreign Ministry's press department.

Slovakia: Ministry Issues Statement on UN Representative

LD1803185696 Bratislava Rozhlasova Stanica Slovensko Network in Slovak 1600 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Foreign Ministry has stressed in its statement published in connection with the decision of the president not to appoint Labor Minister Olga Keltosova permanent Slovak representative at the UN that this post in New York demonstrates the relationship of the state toward this significant global international organization and thus also toward the international community.

The post of a permanent representative at the UN has not been occupied for a critically long period, which puts Slovakia in the small group of countries which do not have a UN representation on the level of a top representative.

According to the Foreign Ministry, by virtue of his decision, the president has irresponsibly caused a serious danger in implementing political and state interests of Slovakia and strengthening our positions in the world.

Slovakia: HZDS Claims Daily Publishing 'Falsification'

AU1803151596 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 15 Mar 96 p 2

[Article by Zita Sujova: "The HZDS Describes the Published Material as a Falsification"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—The Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) Department for Public Opinion sent a statement to NARODNA OBRODA's editorial office yesterday in which it reacts to the articles "If Olga Keltosova Were Appointed Ambassador to the United Nations, Would She Be Controlled by the Slovak Information Service?" (NARODNA OBRODA of 9 March) and "E. Kukan: HZDS Arrogance Can De Detected in the Material" (NARODNA OBRODA of 12 March). The HZDS department states that the material "Main Tasks of the HZDS in Foreign Policy"—to which the editorial office refers in the articles and from which it quotes—is a "deliberately fabricated falsification" and that its wording does not correspond to the contents of the genuine material, drafted within the HZDS on the basis of a resolution adopted by its Republic Presidium on 19 August 1995. According to the HZDS, it is astonishing that this material was published in NARODNA OBRODA nearly nine months after the "drafting of the genuine document" and "at the very time Slovak President Michal Kovac had again confirmed his unwillingness to cooperate with the ruling coalition by rejecting the government's proposal to appoint Olga Keltosova Slovak ambassador to the United Nations." According to its statement, the HZDS Department for Public Opinion "emphatically rejects this and similar expedient attempts by the opposition press to systematically tarnish the good name of the movement."

The editorial office's point of view: The editorial office had the aforementioned material at its disposal at the end of last year, but, in view of the fact that this was an internal party document whose influence on real policy was not, at that time, palpable, we did not think it necessary to refer to it. The arguments contained in the statement issued by the HZDS Department for Public Opinion do not refute the genuineness of this document. We published parts of the material in view of the actual unfolding of the situation—the government's proposal to appoint Olga Keltosova, who is cited in the material as its submitter, to the post of Slovak ambassador to the United Nations.

Slovakia: Aims of New Territorial Division Examined

AU1503171096 Bratislava SME in Slovak 13 Mar 96 p 4

[Article by Kalman Petoecz, member of the Hungarian Civic Party Presidium: "Toward Final Victory?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] I would really like to lend credence to the prime minister's assurances that the purpose of the new territorial and administrative arrangement is not the preparation of a new electoral system. If only...State Secretary at the Ministry of Interior Pavol Kacic did not admit that the two issues were connected, if the government did not have the change in the electoral system embedded in its program, if the government did not stubbornly ignore the original intention to couple the change of the territorial and administrative arrangement with an overall public administration reform, including the clarification of authority, if the prime minister himself did not repeatedly publicly present his reflections on combining the majority and proportional electoral systems, if.... But let me return to the next "if" later.

New Electoral System

Let us use as our premise that what the prime minister says always has some realistic foundations, whether he is in favor or against, whether he agrees or disagrees. Let us therefore assume that the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia [HZDS] is planning to enforce an electoral law combining the system of single-mandate constituencies based on the majority principle (the candidate who gets the largest number of votes in a given constituency will qualify for the National Council of the Slovak Republic [NRSR]) with the proportional system, that is, with a system in which one votes for individual parties' slates of candidates (as has been the case thus far). Under such a combined system, it would be logical to divide the 150 parliamentary seats by half, with 75 seats elected in single-mandate constituencies and another half by means of the proportional system.

Does the number 74, that is, the number of districts proposed by the government, not remind you strongly of the number 75, which is one-half of NRSR seats? What if, during the discussion of the bill in the NRSR, some HZDS deputy stands up and proposes the establishment of, for instance, Novaky district, and the coalition majority approves it?

Let us take a look at the districts the government is planning to establish! In the central Vah valley, that is, on the territory covering today's districts of Cadca, Zilina, and Povazska Bystrica, it proposes the establishment of as many as seven districts. On the other hand, on the territory of the present districts of Nove Zamky and Levice, covering a territory of approximately the same size, it proposes only two districts, identical with the existing ones. At the same time, in this second case, the government completely ignores the principles it has itself proclaimed—that public administration should move closer to citizens and that the will of the population should be considered. At Sahy, Zeliezovce, and Sturovo, regional initiatives have come into being. In Sturovo, they even collected within three days almost 19,000 signatures, which represents 66 percent of all voters of the Sturovo ward [obvod], for a new district. In the districts of Levice and Nove Zamky, the district capitals are located completely off center [excentricky], which is disadvantageous from the viewpoint of transportation, the time spent traveling to the more remote corners of the district, and so forth. What does the government have to say about this? Nothing. Supposedly, it does not want to change the ethnic composition of districts.

What they did and did not want to change in reality will become clearer to us when we compare the map of the newly proposed districts with the map illustrating the HZDS election results. In all districts in which the HZDS scored above-average results in the last elections, starting with Povazska Bystrica and Topolcany and ending with Svidnik and Michalovce, the government proposes their division into two or three smaller districts. As for districts or wards in which the HZDS did not achieve any major success, it either proposes that they be kept as they are, or it proposes a different, mostly very peculiar, course of action. The Tornala ward, for example, is to be adjoined to the district of Revuca. To reach Revuca, the district capital, the inhabitants of the southern part of Tornala ward would have to travel across the territory of the neighboring district and go around one mountain range. Not to see in all these matters a correlation with the electoral law is virtually impossible. This is why I dared sketch this hypothesis that immediately comes to mind.

As for the fate of the other 75 parliamentary seats, I think that the HZDS is considering a proportional system based on a single nationwide ticket. In this way, Vladimir Meciar's name could draw the sights and hands of voters toward the HZDS ticket all across Slovakia, and not just in Central Slovakia as in previous elections.

Opposition's Chance

An electoral law designed in this way would therefore benefit mainly the HZDS. It would be extremely disadvantageous for the Hungarian parties and for the smaller Slovak opposition parties, such as the Democratic Party [DS], the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia [SDSS], and the Green Party of Slovakia [SZS]. However, it would also be disadvantageous for the bigger opposition parties—the Christian Democratic Movement [KDH], the Democratic Union [DU], and the Party of the Democratic Left [SDL]. Their only chance of success would dwell in the formation of a single bloc, which would field in individual districts a single common candidate against the government coalition's candidate. Can you imagine the present opposition being able to agree on such common candidates? However, even the HZDS knows that unification is the opposition's only chance. It is therefore very ingeniously exploiting existing assumed or real differences and disagreements among the opposition parties, driving wedges, and casting baits. Here it drives a wedge into the SDSS and there into the DU, here it casts a bait to the SDL in the form of privatization tidbits, there to the DU by raising the specter of Hungarian ethnic autonomy.

We, the Hungarians, are the worst off. The government is casting baits to us incessantly. Once in the form of alternative education, then in the form of the language law, and then again in the form of the law on the protection of the republic. The Hungarian Coalition has no choice: If it does not react, it surrenders the protection of minority rights, if it does react, it "contributes to the escalation of tensions." At the same time, one has to be objective and admit that some of its politicians do not always react in the most fortunate manner. But what can you do when you have no choice...? There exist no political and legal mechanisms in present-day Slovakia that would prevent the imposition of the majority's will on the minority even in matters expressly concerning the preservation of the minority's identity.

The Rub of the Whole Attempt

There is only one snag in this entire HZDS strategy: Both the administrative and territorial arrangement and the electoral law require parliamentary approval. Although a simple majority of the deputies present is sufficient for this, even that requires agreement with the coalition partners. And coming to an agreement, in particular, with the Slovak National Party [SNS] is difficult. The electoral system outlined above is disadvantageous also for the SNS. It is therefore necessary to negotiate with the SNS, to offer something to it. And to obfuscate the whole process, it is necessary to keep postponing the ratification of the Slovak-Hungarian treaty and to launch nationwide polemics over the so-called four SNS conditions [for its support for the Slovak-Hungarian treaty]. It is not by coincidence that change of the electoral law and the new territorial and administrative arrangement do not feature among these conditions.

The prime minister has repeatedly declared that he is not after property and riches. Indeed, those are not his interests. He is only after power. All he wants is to have at long last such a majority in Parliament as will guarantee his completely restful sleep. After riches are those who will help him achieve that goal.

This reflection about the direct correlation between the territorial division proposed by the government and a new electoral law is, for the time being, just a hypothesis. But even should the government clearly deny the existence of such a correlation, the question will remain unanswered how, for example, a large city such as Kosice, with quarter of a million inhabitants, can have the same status as Poltar district, which hardly exceeds the limit of 30,000 inhabitants set by the government. Is not the sole rational explanation the fact that Kosice is a bastion of the opposition, while, in the other district, HZDS voters dominate?

Slovakia: Daily Rejects Criticism of Antisubversion Law

AU1803150796 Bratislava SLOVENSKA REPUBLIKA in Slovak 15 Mar 96 p 3

[Commentary by Jergus Ferko: "Stone Age Hammer?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The amendment to the Penal Code, popularly known as the law on the protection of the Republic, should tighten sanctions for violations of economic discipline, and stipulate possible punishments for those who would endanger the constitutional system, territorial integrity, and state independence, or for those who would deliberately spread abroad false information damaging to the interests of the Republic.

Citizens, particularly those rightly indignant at the complete impunity of such (wrong)doings, have been calling for years for such articles. The Slovak National Party has actually set the Penal Code amendment as a condition for its support for the ratification of the Slovak-Hungarian treaty.

As expected, the opposition has launched a noisy protest campaign. The crowning event was a certain commentary that called the Penal Code amendment "a Stone Age hammer against democracy." Obviously what is from the Stone Age is something else entirely—namely the commentator's logic, which ignores and distorts many facts.

First, the commentator cites as reprehensible "models" two similar laws from the years 1948 and 1950. However, if he looked into the past a little further, he could not possibly fail to see that the first Czechoslovak Republic (supposedly an exemplary European democracy at that time) also had a law on the protection of the Republic. However, a much more essential detail is that under totalitarian conditions, the application of any kind of law is qualitatively different than under the conditions of democracy. Confusing these two eras in a mechanical way is like mounting components from a Trabant car into a space shuttle.

Second, the application of any kind of law lies in the hands of the courts, whose independence in Slovakia no one calls in question.

Third, western European democracies, too, have laws to protect their constitutions, territorial integrity, and sovereignty. They do not put up with their citizens spreading nonsense about their country.

Fourth, no one probably doubts that, if the Penal Code amendment led to the intimidation and unjust persecution of citizens, the international community would intervene harshly against Slovakia, for which it has in its hands sufficiently effective levers.

And, finally, there is another important defect in the commentator's ossified and schematic logic. If someone proclaims an ethnic minority's right to self-determination (that is, the right to create its own state), it can be considered an "expression of opinion," but, above all, it is an attack against the Constitution and the territorial integrity of the state. If someone spreads reports in the world to the effect that ethnic purges are taking place in Slovakia, he is obviously grossly violating the rules of the game called democracy. It is precisely the fact that until now, these people have not been punished, which encouraged recidivism, which jeopardizes democracy. Freedom of speech does not mean the freedom to spread coarse lies, false alarming reports, and anarchy, and to attack the foundations of the state and its democratic system.

For those making hammers for stone-age logic, however, all these details seem to be immaterial and uninteresting. What matters is that the hammer make a loud noise and be heard clearly enough abroad.

Slovakia: Economy Minister Views Industrial Trends

AU1503164196 Bratislava HOSPODARSKE NOVINY in Slovak 12 Mar 96 p 5

["Abbreviated" speech by Slovak Economy Minister Jan Ducky at the 15th regular assembly of the HN Club in Bratislava on 8 March: "Mechanical Engineering Recovered, but It Must Stay Vigilant"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The final data released by the Slovak Statistical Office are better than what we have worked with until now. The GDP increase amounted to 7.6 percent. That is more than in Poland, where they believe that in this respect, their country is the European leader for last year. Inflation reached only 7.2 percent for the year. Since I already mentioned Poland—it is three times as high in that country.

If we assess the results of last year, we cannot forget some indicators which concern entrepreneurs, albeit they are connected with banking or business results. The amount of Slovak foreign currency reserves reached, and from the point of view of the so-called large foreign currency circuit [both the central bank and the commercial banks] exceeded $5 billion. This, of course, is a result of good economic policy—I do not want to say of only the government because it also applies to other entities involved. First of all, there is a certain modesty in budgets. Almost no sector exhausted the planned budget.

They managed this with the business entities, and the surplus trade balance adds to the success. Of course, one could retort that the balance of payments is more interesting but we are one of the few Central and East European states with a trade surplus. The surplus is a symbolic one—about 1.7 billion korunas [Sk]. Nevertheless, we managed this despite the continuing link with Russia, where we ended with a deficit of $1.2 billion.

Dissatisfaction Over Unemployment

The amount of foreign currency reserves is almost two and a half times greater than the country's foreign debt. This debt amounts to some $2 billion. This means that we are continuing in the good tradition of the former federation—Czecho-Slovakia always was one of the states not used to running up excessive debts, and it economized in spending rather than living on debts. The balance of payments should be even better because it includes also proceeds from transit and services that Slovakia provides to some other states.

The factor with which the government is not satisfied, and which did not record sufficiently favorable dynamics in its reduction, is unemployment. It declined by 2 percent, reaching the level of 13 percent. That is a lot. It is also connected with unused production capacity. Based on these figures, priorities can easily be set for the next period.

Structure of Foreign Trade

Priorities are now traditionally repeated. First of all, there is the support for exports and the support for modern investments. Here, one must note the interesting structure of Slovak exports. As much as 40 percent of all exports go to the OECD states. Within the framework of these states, the most important are the EU states, and within the framework of the EU, it is Germany. The strongest Slovak trade partner is the Czech Republic. It holds a 35 percent share in our exports, and almost 30 percent in imports. This 30 percent of our dependence on the Czech economy is an optimum, and under no circumstances would I want this share to decrease. It is a proof that we maintain healthy business and cooperation relations. Nevertheless, the extent of a conceivable growth of these relations will be decided by businessmen and the conditions for their business. The following ranks in our foreign trade are held by CEFTA countries. The dynamics of our trade with all CEFTA countries, except for Hungary, is higher than the average for all our trading partners.

Strong Power Generating Industry—Prerequisite for Success

Why did we achieve good results last year?

First of all, I would like to point out a certain robust nature of the Slovak economy. Robust in the good sense of the word, particularly as far as the power-generating basis is concerned. As opposed to the neighboring states, the Slovak Republic had no problems with power. That is with the exception of this year, when the dynamics of electric power consumption is unprecedented—plus 12 percent in January in comparison with the same month of last year, and 18 percent on a year-to-year basis in February. Fortunately, specific consumption is slightly declining—of course, household consumption is not dominant in this respect—which means that it is another clear proof of the dynamics of the economic development.

On the other hand, these favorable results also are a reason for reflecting on the completion of the started power sources—be it Mochovce [nuclear power plant], Gabcikovo [controversial hydroelectric project], or the construction of the Zilina Hydroelectric Project. At present, it is expected that the Slovak Republic will import the equivalent of almost 800 MW of installed capacity. This translates to the capacity of two and a half units of the Mochovce nuclear power plant.

Interest in Financing the Completion of Mochovce

This renders understandable the pressure exerted by the government for the completion of the Mochovce nuclear power plant. One could say that the hydroelectric potential of the Slovak Republic is taxed to its capacity. Following the completion of the first two Mochovce units, we intend to complete a third and a fourth one, and to modernize the Jaslovske Bohunice nuclear power plant. After the first two Mochovce units are completed and operating commercially for a year, we will reconsider what to do about two units in Jaslovske Bohunice. At any rate, we refuse any discussions on whether or not to complete Mochovce. We just have to complete this construction now. We will almost certainly see a progress this Wednesday [13 March], Mochovce inspection day. The subcontractors have been on the whole selected and contracts signed.

I am glad that following the "storm" over Mochovce, the number of financial institutions offering funds for the completion is growing. We are only negotiating the price of the money, of course, to achieve the optimum cost.

A Disadvantage Became an Advantage

I take the liberty of claiming that the comparative disadvantage of Slovakia (the Slovak economy was built within the framework of the federation as a supplementary and complementary one for the CMEA economy), after the partition of the federation and emergence of the Slovak economy appears in the final analysis, and especially from the vantage point of time, as a certain advantage. Of course, this means a greater share of original production, and therefore a greater share of semifinished goods. According to economic theory and practice, it is a disadvantage at this time, but if the process of transformation of the entire society is taken into account, the problems resulting from this process emerge as an advantage because it is easier to market semifinished products than finished goods. One should seek an answer here to the question of why the trade balance is as good as it is. Nevertheless, that is not the main advantage of this state. I see this advantage in the future. The new identifiable owners will have to deal with the problem of restructuring. It is only logical that it has not been organized by the state in expectation of privatization because each new owner could say that he will not pay for restructuring as his idea of it is different. Thus it is up to the new owners and, as opposed to most of the European states, they will find at home enough material and semifinished products on which to build the final production.

We Need Markets

Last year, almost 70 percent of the GDP was generated by the private sector. It is of particular importance that, as opposed to 1994, exports were not chiefly responsible for the GDP growth but rather the threesome of exports, domestic consumption, and investments. Our main objective is to increase the share of domestic production and investment, and maintain the dynamic level of exports to which we have become accustomed. That requires markets.

This year, we hold the CEFTA chair, have a free trade agreement with Romania, and we signed a treaty with Bulgaria that went into effect on 1 January 1996; a treaty with Israel is waiting to be signed, and we have progressed in cooperation with Turkey, Estonia, and the other Baltic republics. We want to cover the entire region of former Yugoslavia, and Ukraine has indicated interest in membership.

The goal is to create a market area between the Baltic, the Black Sea, and the Adriatic, with a population of between 150 and 200 million. It is not an alternative to the European Union. I would call it a training camp because the schedule for joining the EU is uncertain, and it would be a sin to wait passively. The endeavors of individual states to employ this advantage of their economies reciprocally is only logical.

Priority—The Russian Region

The Slovak and the Czech Republics act as a catalyst for trade cooperation. It is logical because our customs barriers are among the best in the world. Our customs protection, i.e., the domestic market protection, comes to the figure of 3.8 percent.

We are working, although it is very difficult from the point of view of time, on improving conditions for trade exchange with Russia. As a result of an agreement between the prime ministers, we signed a protocol, and a treaty on free trade should eventually follow. I, as economy minister, would be glad if it were signed already for our exports to Russia declined to 3.8 percent from the former 40-50 percent of the total volume. Namely, some of our capacities, because of their size, can be used only for the Russian market. Here lies also a part of the answer to the question of why is there such a high rate of unemployment particularly in mechanical engineering. From this point of view, Russia will remain our permanent priority.

Diversification of Fuel Sources

An important problem in every economy is the diversification of fuel sources. We are mostly working on the means of transport. This concerns cooperation with the Austrian pipeline operator OeMV on interconnecting Slovnaft and the Austrian pipeline network with the idea that we would like it best if the 54 kilometers of this route were two-way. We will see whether or not we are going to reach this consensus. According to expert calculations, it is apparent that alternative sources are 20 to 30 percent more expensive than the Russian ones. We have frequently been criticized for not utilizing Ingolstadt. It must be noted that this would only mean a diversification of the transport route, and not of the source. Hence, all endeavors so far to bring this raw material to us from other sources carry this economic burden we mentioned, and someone would have to pay it. I expect that the time when the prices of energy will change is mercilessly coming closer.

Internal Reserves in the Firms

The support for exports on the part of the state, especially in the form of currency policy, the currency exchange rate against the dollar, is enormous. It is time to be stricter and look into the internal sources of enterprises. They are particularly in wages, which are much lower than in the advanced countries. Businessmen, you certainly know where your production basis, your machine equipment comes from, and sometimes it seems incomprehensible to me how come that with Western hardware and cheaper wages, we cannot sell the goods. The stage when this will be revealed is just as mercilessly coming closer, and I believe that the restructuring process will have to react to this fact. The government expects that a massive influx of foreign capital in various forms will follow the completion of privatization.

The Decisive Enterprises

I must not forget those who were responsible for the lion's share of the results of last year with respect to exports. Unfortunately, it is a relatively small number of large enterprises. The share of metallurgical (VSZ) and chemical industries remains disproportionately high, while the pulp and paper industry (SCP Ruzomberok) does very well. Of course, it bears a seal of the past development regarding investments into these enterprises at one time, then three devaluations, and the resulting impact on the export sphere and financial policy by means of the currency policy. I am saying this because managements should realize this and invest the maximum possible of these sources into the future modern equipment.

Will Mechanical Engineering Make a Historical Mistake?

The Czech business sector is becoming more interested in the Slovak Republic. Over the past two months, I have held talks with the representatives of CKD Plzen three times, and Chepos Brno twice. CKD Praha already founded CKD Slovakia. If our engineering industry uses the disintegration of the structures of Czecho-Slovak engineering and a share of Czech industry in building modern capacities in Slovakia in the spheres of chemical, paper, and metallurgical industries, it will make a historical mistake. We have so many engineering capacities that it is impossible for us to import a large part of the funds that major investors put into maintenance and repair work. As far as possible, we will use our legislative influence to prevent the import of these capacities, and better use the domestic opportunities.

I am glad that engineering is from the point of development finally back in the black. While the industrial production growth generally moved between 8 and 13 percent last year, in mechanical engineering it was 22 percent. While the increase of Slovak exports was 22 percent, in mechanical engineering it was 45 percent. If it were not after such a deep fall, it would be a reason for satisfaction. I believe that mechanical engineering is out of the worst, and we will have to find production programs for the free capacities.

Challenge to Slovak Banks

The government adopted a law on public works. These are large projects in infrastructure—telecommunications, highways, transport, and power generation-related construction. They are mostly government guaranteed. It is a challenge to Slovak banks. Their management became nervous, and cannot deal with financing Mochovce. I cannot understand this, when Czech and even foreign banks are taking part. There is something wrong somewhere—this applies in general.

Foreign banks mercilessly take over this area. Their participation comes to 30 to 32 percent. That is a lot. It really is a challenge to the Slovak banks to protect their area of operations. It seems that in this respect we see better times coming, and not only by the level of credit interest rates but also in the approach to these problems.

On the basis of the aforementioned results, I am convinced that the Slovak Republic does not have to worry about the future in economic policy. It does not have to be concerned about isolation or shortage of foreign capital either. It will depend on the new enterprise owners, the conditions under which they will manage the property they acquired, and how they will cultivate it.

Slovakia: Rally Marks 'Fascist' State; Support 'Minimal'

AU1803164196 Bratislava PRAVDA in Slovak 15 Mar 96 p 1

[Article by Vaclav Pankovcin: "Panisites Demonstrated at Slovak National Uprising Square; Participation Minimal"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Bratislava—Supporters of the 1939-45 Slovak state and its president, Doctor Jozef Tiso, held a rally at Slovak National Uprising Square in Bratislava yesterday, with a strong state and city police presence. Several dozen people and curious onlookers met here, in defiance of the fact that the Bratislava mayor had not permitted the use of a public area for the rally, which had been convened by the Slovak National Unity (SNJ) and by the Doctor Jozef Tiso Society.

However, the rally, held to mark the 57th anniversary of the founding of the fascist Slovak state, had been properly registered with the Bratislava-Old City Municipal District Office. At two o'clock in the afternoon, a handful of admirers of President Tiso laid wreaths at his alleged grave at St. Martin Cemetery. Elena Kozankova, chairwoman of the Jozef Tiso Society, delivered an emotional speech at the grave site, in which she said that they had gathered in order to pay tribute to the first Slovak president, who deserves great credit for the Slovak nation. "Every era needs a leader like Doctor Tiso." After their prayers, Tiso's admirers moved to Slovak National Uprising Square, where Mrs. Kozankova compared the members of the SNJ and the Jozef Tiso Society to a group of apostles spreading the gospel....

The peaceful rally was disrupted by the arrival of some 30 skinheads with a Slovak flag, chanting "Slovakia for Slovaks!" Evidently bored, they left after half an hour. The main speaker was SNJ Chairman Stanislav Panis, who, among other things, accused virtually all politicians in Slovakia of being communists and traitors. He said that Slovakia would not fare well as long as Meciar was around. He branded parliamentary deputies, and the president, as communists, and hurled invective at representatives of the Slovak National Party and at the editors of radio, television, and all the dailies.

[Bratislava SME in Slovak on 15 March on page 2 carries a 500-word report by Eva Cobejova and Juraj Mravec on the 14 March rally of "Stanislav Panis's faithful." The SME reporters observe that "their number was substantially smaller than last year, not to mention the two years before that. The devotees of the [1939-45] Slovak state are dying out. Approximately 100 of them turned up yesterday, joined, as every year, by skinheads with Slovak flags."]

Slovakia: Statement Issued on State Anniversary

AU1903133396 Bratislava NARODNA OBRODA in Slovak 15 Mar 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "The Slovak State Suppressed Basic Human and Civil Rights"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Office of the President has issued a statement to the NARODNA OBRODA editorial office on yesterday's 57th anniversary of the establishment of the Slovak state. It says: The historical facts available now confirm that, under the given situation, there was no more plausible solution for Slovakia than to declare state independence. This statement, however, must not prevent us from recognizing that, from the very beginning of its existence, this was a vassal state dependent on the will of a Nazi protector, that it was an undemocratic state that progressed from an authoritarian regime to a totalitarian regime in which basic human and civil rights were suppressed, and that it deported from its territory—and thus sent to their deaths—tens of thousands of Jewish and other fellow citizens.

Today's Slovak Republic, as a democratic independent state that respects all human and civil rights and cooperates with the large family of free democratic nations, follows up on the best historical traditions of our national and European history and will not allow itself to be dragged into the vicious circles in which the spiritual descendants of the wartime totalitarian regime live, emphasizes the Office of the Slovak President in its statement.

Office of the Slovak President, Bratislava.

Hungary: Kovacs on Russian Duma, Treaty With Romania

LD1803211596 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1700 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Hungarian Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs, it is known even in Moscow that the former Soviet Union cannot be reinstated. Therefore the Hungarian foreign minister does not consider the restoration efforts happening in the lower chamber of the Russian parliament to be significant.

Speaking of the Hungarian-Romanian basic treaty, which is in the process of preparation, Kovacs said that Hungary can only sign a document into which international norms guaranteeing minority rights fit without exception. The Hungarian foreign minister recalled that Romania had also accepted the relevant recommendations of the United Nations, the Organization for Security Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe. This is why it is not enough to recognize the inviolability of the borders and to accept that the sides do not have territorial demands against each other. Kovacs stressed that the international political opinion takes on a mediating role only in the birth of a basic treaty that adheres to European norms.

Hungary: Kovacs Views EU, NATO Integration

AU1503175096 Budapest MAGYAR NEMZET in Hungarian 14 Mar 96 p 7

[Interview with Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs by Gabor Lambert; place and date not given: "The Government Rejects the Confrontation of Basic Foreign Policy Goals"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Close to 150 years ago, the Hungarian nation was connected by 12 points. A few years ago, when parliamentary democracy replaced the one-party system, the parliamentary parties still had three connecting points that they could present as basic common national and foreign policy goals despite all the other differences between them. We asked Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs what has been preserved from these points and about his view on the possibility of implementing the Hungarian Government's interests in the international arena.

[Lambert] After the change of regime, the political parties succeeded in reaching agreement on our national interests in foreign policy very quickly, and no political force in Parliament has other priorities today either. However, the oft-mentioned consensus has disintegrated and is becoming increasingly remote. What is the reason for this contradiction?

[Kovacs] The three main lines of Hungarian foreign policy (integrating Hungary into the euro-atlantic community, settled relations with the neighbors, and support for the ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders) are goals that logically derive from Hungary's history, geopolitical situation, and social-economic abilities. I think that not a single force that feels a sense of responsibility for Hungary's future, security, and economic and social progress can choose any other main foreign policy lines of action. This explains the fact that there continues to be a consensus regarding the goals. However, if we look a little deeper, differences arise regarding two aspects. First, on the relationship between these goals, whether the one helps or hinders the other's implementation, and whether they can be harmonized or can only be asserted to the detriment of the others. There are also differences of views on the means of achieving these goals. In the view of the government, of the two government parties, these three goals are very closely interrelated and they are interdependent in asserting themselves. Progress in euro-atlantic integration, the integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the euro-atlantic community will obviously have a favorable effect on the bilateral relations of the countries in this region, including the relations between Hungary and its neighbors. Euro-atlantic integration must be accompanied by the fulfillment of a series of demands in the countries that join this integration, like full assertion of parliamentary democracy and the constitutional state and guarantees for human and national minority rights according to European norms. Therefore, in the long run, this will also promote the third goal of the Hungarian foreign policy, namely the improvement of the situation of the minorities and of the ethnic Hungarian minority living beyond our borders. It is also true that the strengthening of relations with our neighbors will improve our integration chances, because it is well known: EU and NATO leaders have repeatedly stated that they do not want to bring tensions from this region into their organizations. And the assertion of minority rights, of the rights of the ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders will improve the relations between neighbors and will strengthen stability in the region, and by this, the region's suitability for euro-atlantic integration. So, there is a very close interdependence among the three goals and, therefore, the government rejects any confrontation of these goals with one another. Of course, this does not mean that we do not have to pay greater attention to one or another of these goals at a given time, precisely because of the timeliness of the relevant issue.

Regarding the means, actually two kinds of foreign policy views confront each other. One view, represented by the government, attaches decisive importance to realities in foreign policy. Our starting point is determined by Hungary's interests and the international system of conditions. The other view, one that opposes the aforementioned view, approaches foreign policy much more from the point of view of desires and wishes, something that occasionally involves serious dangers.

[Lambert] When the government starts from the premise that improving neighborhood relations will help our integration, it also presumes that our neighbors' geostrategic goals are the same as Hungary's geostrategic goals; in other words, they see possibilities of catching up with Europe as soon as possible. However, only too recently some studies have emerged in Hungary that doubt this....

[Kovacs] I do not claim that everyone in Slovakia and Romania is in favor of euro-atlantic integration; nor would I regard as true any such statement regarding Hungary either. But I do know that the official Slovak and Romanian policy regard their countries' euro-atlantic integration as goals of utmost importance, and they repeatedly assert this. I do not see any signs attesting to a weakening of this intention on the part of the governments of these countries. How the governments and the political elite of these countries evaluate the chances of this integration in time is another matter. The countries in this region will probably not be able to integrate into the euro-atlantic community at the same time; the process will probably be staggered in some way. It is not yet known whether the European Union or NATO will open its doors first; nor do we know whether the same countries will join these two organizations in the first stage of expansion. The Hungarian Government has repeatedly expressed its interest in seeing as many countries as possible join this integration, in seeing as many neighbors as possible join the European Union and NATO. Of course, Hungary cannot set the conditions of euro-atlantic integration for any country or for any of its neighbors. However, Hungary is ready to argue at international forums that expanding the integration is both in the interest of the countries in this region and of the existing EU and NATO member states.

[Lambert] In other words, the Hungarian Government does not see any danger that our neighbors might become more interested in delaying Hungary's integration instead, by realizing that they cannot make it into the first circle.

[Kovacs] I think this would contradict common sense and our neighbors' real interests. Hungary is not interested in delaying the integration of one or two countries either, countries that, according to some opinions, have better chances of making it than Hungary; instead, Hungary is striving to catch up with these countries.

[Lambert] Do I understand it correctly that, regarding the third line of our national interests, in accepting responsibility for the fate of ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders, the Hungarian Government seems to have been on the defensive lately?

[Kovacs] The truth is that, in my view, the most frequent unfounded attacks against the government come from this, and the government is, naturally, obliged to respond to these attacks. In my view, the opposition politicians who accuse the government of not giving sufficient attention to supporting the ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders are precisely aware of the limits of the Hungarian Government and of the Hungarian foreign policy. We are in contact with them, and we often hold six-party consultations when they do not address the public. They formulate things differently when they are not engaged in some kind of advanced election campaign. In other words, the opposition politicians who are so active on this issue, at least most of them, are clearly aware of the realities, but they think that it is worth using this opportunity for an attack against the government. I am afraid, however, that presenting this issue in such a way in parliamentary confrontations and domestic policy struggles will sooner or later have the opposite effect: a considerable part of the Hungarian public will become somehow fed up with this issue, and this will only weaken solidarity with the fate of ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders.

[Lambert] This is possible but, so far, a consensus has not yet emerged on the extent of our responsibility for the fate of ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders and on what we should and what we can do for them. Thus, the opinions of various politicians also move on a rather broad scale. Why did the government parties refrain from putting this debate on the agenda of the Hungarian Parliament?

[Kovacs] We did not refrain from holding a parliamentary debate on the situation of ethnic Hungarians beyond our borders; this was not even the purpose of the proposal. The proposal was aimed at discussing the autonomy efforts of the ethnic Hungarian communities living beyond our borders. I think this debate should first be carried out at a professional level with those involved in the question. It is well known that the ethnic Hungarians living in the neighboring countries are rather divided regarding the desirable form of autonomy. For example, the two organizations in Vojvodina, the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians and the Federation of Vojvodina Hungarians have separate autonomy concepts that differ on many points, and each organization regards his own solution as the correct one. There are also considerable differences regarding the autonomy issue between the Democratic Union of

Hungarians in Romania and the organizations of ethnic Hungarians living in Slovakia. We would harm the cause of autonomy if the Hungarian Parliament put this issue on its agenda before a professional debate clarified the issue.

[Lambert] Because the limits of tolerance are not clarified either, some people in the Hungarian Parliament would already initiate the peaceful restoration of territories lost with the Trianon peace treaty. What might be the reaction to such a claim?

[Kovacs] I was not surprised by the proposal made by parliamentary deputy Sandor Kavassy because this was preceded by a number of speeches, interpellations, and questions of other representatives of the Independent Smallholders' Party [FKGP] that reflected similar views. I also had these in mind when I said that some opposition politicians totally ignore the realities. For example, when someone comes up with the proposal that the 386 deputies of the Hungarian Parliament should travel to Strasbourg, surround the building of the European Parliament there, and keep the deputies in there until they make some decision on the issue of the educational law in Romania or the language law in Slovakia.... In other words, when the head of a party group in the Hungarian Parliament who, I suppose, takes the Hungarian Parliament and his own position seriously, makes such a proposal in the Hungarian Parliament, I think one should not be surprised when someone comes up with the idea of revising the Trianon agreement. However, I do know that such irresponsible efforts can cause serious damage to Hungary.

[Lambert] Has there been any international reaction?

[Kovacs] We have had reactions to the living chain. Many of my negotiating partners have expressed their opinion on the idea—allow me not to quote how. We have not yet had any reaction to the latter suggestion, but I can imagine what kind of reception it will meet with in Europe, which is very afraid that the stability in this region might be disturbed. If all this is said by a small nonparliamentary group, it is easily dismissed abroad. I see the problem in that these demands were formulated by representatives of a party whose leaders claim day after day that they are an arm's length away from ruling.

[Lambert] Although the start of our talks on admission is not yet at an arm's length, it might not be too early to consider the issue of how we can present Hungarian national interests in this process.

[Kovacs] Perhaps we should start with the fact that this is the first time this century that Hungary can freely choose the community it wishes to belong to, and this is the community of the euro-atlantic region's developed and democratic countries. Membership would guarantee Hungary's security, strengthen its stability, and promote its economic and social modernization and development. This opinion is the starting point of the government's integration attitude and policy. From time to time, it is said—last time even by the chairman of the parliamentary integration affairs committee, who is the leader of an opposition party—that Hungary does not have to join the European Union at all costs. Well, words and statements do not have the same message in politics as they do in social contacts. It is natural that Hungary does not want to join at all costs, and it does not want to make an agreement that is contrary to its own interests, but the use of the "not at all costs" in politics shows some kind of uncertainty. It can deliver the false message that Hungary does not really want to join.

Hungary has to join the European Union and NATO by achieving the best possible conditions through defending and asserting its true national interests at the talks. We have to prepare very thoroughly for these talks. However, our first task is to make Hungary suitable for admission. In the case of both the European Union and NATO, this primarily means that the institutions of parliamentary democracy have to function undisturbed in Hungary, the constitutional state has to be unquestionable, and we have to make further progress on the road of creating a market economy. All these are in perfect agreement with our national interests as, regardless of the European Union and NATO, it is in our interest to proceed in this direction. Special requirements also exist. For example, in the interest of European membership, the economy has to be made suitable for this and competitive, the legal system has to be coordinated with that of the European Union, state administration has to be prepared for the requirements of membership (with some irony, I can say that bureaucracy also has to conform to European norms) and last but not least, the public, the population, the voters have to be prepared for this—we are already working on this.

[Lambert] Can we precisely define the Hungarian expectations in connection with the future admission talks already now?

[Kovacs] By the end of the European Union's intergovernmental conference, which is to start in March this year, (probably summer 1997) the Brussels Committee has to prepare its detailed opinion on the admission applications of the by then probably 12 associated countries. As the first step of this process, the associated countries will receive within a few weeks a questionnaire running to hundreds of pages, and they will have to give answers to the many thousands of questions in it before the beginning of the summer. This will form the starting point of the suitability assessment. As a result, in the second half of next year, at the end of 1997 at the latest, having been informed about the Brussels Committee's through assessment, the EU summit will be in a position to say with which countries it is worth starting talks. Naturally, we cannot say in advance what negotiating positions Hungary will have on the various points because filling in the questionnaires will be the first time we face the requirement system concretely and in great detail, and from these requirements we will be able to deduce the most important and difficult questions that are to arise during the talks.

[Lambert] However, we already know that Hungary is not interested for example in partial membership.

[Kovacs] That is true. Hungary is interested in a full and organic merger with the euro-atlantic community. By full, I do not only mean that we want to join the European Union as well as NATO and, what logically follows from this, the Western European Union; it also means that we strive for membership in all areas and with full rights, rather than for some kind of partial solution. I am convinced that partial solutions, for example, suggestions that the associated countries should first only participate in common foreign and security policy, and interior and justice affairs—that is, not in the economic area—in the integration mean a blind alley and we must avoid this by all means. As far as I know, the countries wishing to join completely agree on this point.

[Lambert] Has it been decided with what institutional mechanism we will prepare for the admission talks? Will it be possible that two Hungarian ministers, traveling to Brussels at two different points in time will represent two contradictory stances?

[Kovacs] This example is not from the time of this government, and some important decisions have recently been made to avoid such situations. First of all, an integration cabinet has been set up in the government, which is chaired by the prime minister, and its members consist of the interior, justice, industry and trade, finance, and foreign ministers, namely the ministries most affected by the issue of EU membership. The question arises why the head of the agricultural ministry is not a member, but the ministers for transport and infrastructure or environmental protection are also missing from it. The idea was to make this cabinet as small as possible. Naturally, the minister who is competent in the issues under discussion on a particular day will always be invited to the session. However, the cabinet can be more efficient if it is relatively small. A strategic working group has been set up in the Prime Minister's Office which provides research, analysis, and planning background for the integration cabinet. With the participation of many institutions and researchers, this coordinates the assessments which will form the basis of the Hungarian stance and future negotiating positions. From the side of state administration, the integration state secretariat, which has just been set up in the Foreign Ministry, provides the background for the cabinet. It is responsible for the operational control and coordination between the various governmental areas of integration preparation. According to the integration cabinet's decision, the Industry Ministry's Office for European Affairs will be split and the section that deals with preparation for European integration within this ministry will remain with it, while the section dealing with coordination between the ministries will be attached to the Foreign Ministry's integration state secretariat. In addition to all these, the European integration interministerial committee, which has been working well and effectively for 18 months, will continue to operate as before. In this, representatives of the various ministries coordinate the preparatory work of the ministries and authorities.

[Lambert] Does this mean that it has been decided that a separate integration ministry will not be set up?

[Kovacs] This is not planned. We have had a look at the EU member states' practice, including the three recently joined countries, and we have also taken the practice of the other associated countries into consideration. Only a few countries had separate European ministries but most of these have been closed down since then. This does not seem to be the pattern to be followed. However, it is definitely necessary for a ministry to be directly responsible for admission, and it is expedient not to choose the ministry of an economic branch for this task. That is the reason I agree with the decision that the Foreign Ministry should coordinate the admission activities.

[Lambert] Finally, on the basis of your recent talks in Moscow, what is needed to make Russia also accept our strategic change of direction? In this direction, it is unlikely to depend only on the level of our preparation at the talks....

[Kovacs] The fact that Russia acknowledges Hungary's foreign policy orientation is one of the most important observations of my Moscow talks. Foreign Minister Primakov clearly confirmed that they understand that Hungary wants to be member of the European Union and Western European Union. He also acknowledged my arguments for wishing to join NATO; his reaction was not negative. At the same time, he stated that Russia is against the unlimited expansion of NATO and that, as a result of this expansion, NATO's military infrastructure would come closer to Russia's borders. It was noteworthy that this was the first time—including negotiations and news conferences—that he spoke about the possibility of a compromise as regards NATO's expansion. It is also part of the result of the talks that the Russian partners reacted favorably to bilateral issues, seeking solutions, primarily to Hungary's need to reduce the significant Hungarian deficit in bilateral trade.

Hungary: Horn Attacks Remarks by Budapest Mayor

LD1503202396 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1730 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today Prime Minister Horn Gyula became angry with someone, and it was not Jozsef Torgyan or Istvan Csurka, but Budapest Mayor Gabor Demszky. At a commemoration at the Petofi statue this morning, the Budapest mayor said that the government should fight against social problems, poverty, ignorance, crime, violence, destruction of the environment, racial prejudice, and corruption instead of thinking about how it could strengthen its own power. Gyula Horn regards Gabor Demszky's remark as unacceptable, especially as he is from a government party not an opposition politician.

[Begin Horn recording] Criticism is everybody's right. However, I think that the metropolitan self-government also has good reason to look into itself, its activity. Pointing a finger at others is never a good thing. Everyone should do one's own job. Like the parliament and the government, I think that the metropolitan self-government also has plenty of tasks.

We want to be partners. In the current situation, it is very easy to make popular statements, but one should be aware of how much the country can bear. It is a very painful transition period with plenty of problems and difficulties. I ask for patience, confidence, and cooperation from all participants of public life. [end recording]

Hungary: Editorial Condemns FKGP Leader's Speech

AU1903121496 Budapest NEPSZABADSAG in Hungarian 16 Mar 96 p 3

[Editorial: "In the Voice of Hatred"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Independent Smallholders Party [FKGP] Chairman Jozsef Torgyan advertised his event as a farewell to the government, but he actually said farewell to something else, namely to democracy. The party whose stance is based on the ideological basis of the 14 March Torgyan speech will find it difficult from now on to refer to parliamentary democracy, even though it was the oldest Hungarian democratic party among the current parties. Yes, like this, in past tense. Torgyan's party, if it follows its leader's line, will take a sharp turn to the right: to the extreme right. From there on, it is no longer the party of Szabo Nagyatadi or Bajcsy-Zsilinszky [former FKGP leaders]; rather, it is the denial of everything they represented. Up to now, both in Hungary and abroad, Torgyan has been seen as a representative of populism who is not averse to demagogy, either—but the 14 March speech was not simply populist. This was different and more: It speculated on the despair and embitterment of broad masses of people, and it was directed at arousing passions and emotions. A party leader, after whose speech the crowd demands death for the prime minister and he, rather than calming them down, continues to fan the emotions, is responsible for this, even if not legally, but certainly morally. Especially if he reacts to this by "down with the" [pusztuljanak] liberal-bolsheviks. In none of the democratic countries would the leader of a parliamentary party permit himself this, or to describe his opponents as enemies, demonize them, or to say that they are of a lower order: to qualify them as some sham-liberal disgusting worms and vultures.

Torgyan, whose first major visits as party chairman were made at the invitation of the Taiwanese anticommunist league, made "the aliens" responsible for the country's difficult situation. The aliens have to be removed from the nation's body, and this is the reason victory is necessary over the "liberal and Bolshevik forces that serve alien interests." Older readers will remember precisely that the same has happened before: The terminology of xenophobia that incites has not much changed in six decades. At that time, those politicians who played these chords of demagogy started with xenophobia and ended up as embodiments of fascism.

Even turning sharply to the right, Torgyan tried to give the impression that he was still within the law. This is not easy, and he did not quite manage it, either. In the event of his election victory, he held out the prospect of temporarily bringing back the death penalty, although this is unconstitutional at the moment. This at the same time indicates his true attitude toward the Hungarian Republic's Constitution.

Talking about the 14 March event, Torgyan mentions the demonstration of 100,000 people, emphasizing that if Horn does not understand this then a crowd of half a billion [as published] will make him understand. Not even half of the 100,000 is true and the half a billion cannot be understood. Torgyan is not bothered by this because, captive of his own rhetoric, he has sailed away from the shores of reality. It is possible that it will be too late when he understands that he overshot the target.

History does not repeat itself, and people forget, but not that fast and not everything. 1996 is not 1936 and 1998 will not be 1938.

Hungary: Ethnic Hungarians Agree on Media Representation

LD1803213996 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 1500 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hungarian organizations beyond the border have come to an agreement on their participation in Hungarian radio and television boards of trustees. Agnes Pap reports from their press briefing.

[Pap] The decision was unanimous, Political State Secretary Csaba Tabajdi emphasized, and said that such a unity and the fact that non-Hungarian citizens—though Hungarian-speaking people—could be delegated to the media boards of trustees in Hungary were unprecedented.

The Hungarians of Romania can delegate the most representatives—namely three—to the board of trustees of Hungaria Television [public foundation that supervises Duna TV]. The Hungarian organizations of Slovakia will delegate two representatives, while Hungarians living on the territory of Yugoslavia will delegate one representative to this body. Those living on the territory of Ukraine, Slovenia, and Croatia will delegate one representative to this body in a rotation system.

The Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania, the Csemadok [Hungarian cultural organization] of Slovakia, the Association of Vojvodina Hungarians, the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians, and Hungarian organizations of Sub-Carpathia can decide themselves who will represent them in the board of trustees and will examine annually how the delegates worked.

The UDMR chairman raised at the meeting that the number of representatives of the Duna TV's board of trustees should be increased by two. Csaba Tabajdi said that this depended on an agreement by the political parties of Hungary.

B-H: Koljevic Assesses Geneva Talks on Bosnia

AU1803210996 Belgrade RTB Television Network in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 18 Mar 96

[Interview with Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the Serb Republic, by Zoran Jevdjovic, in Geneva on 18 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Jevdjovic] Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the Serb Republic, also attended the meeting in Geneva. Could you tell us what your impressions and conclusions are?

[Koljevic] The best news for the Serb Republic from today's meeting is probably the news that civilian and commercial traffic between Belgrade and Sarajevo, and Belgrade and Banja Luka, will be opened very soon.

We also discussed other issues, above all the settlement of the problem of war prisoners. It is well known that the Serb side has fulfilled its obligations. And finally, in the talks with Federation Vice President Ganic and Prime Minister Muratovic, I personally spoke about the problems that are in our way at present. These are the problems of cooperation regarding infrastructure.

What is probably most important is that I have received personal assurances that both the international community and the authorities of the Federation will make sure that the Serbs from Sarajevo, those who have stayed, will be protected fully. Let us hope that these assurances come true.

[Jevdjovic] What about elections?

[Koljevic] Regarding elections, it appears that it is in everyone's interest that these be held as soon as possible. We have never had anything against elections. We thought that elections should be held as soon as the conditions have been created, or even when the international community establishes that these conditions exist. Our people and leadership have always been ready for elections. Therefore, as far as we are concerned, there are no problems. It appears that the other side also agrees.

[Jevdjovic] Thank you.

B-H: Sarajevo Radio Views Conclusions of Geneva Talks

AU1903103696 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has described yesterday's meeting of Balkan leaders in Geneva as yet another step toward cooperation among the three sides for peace.

At yesterday's meeting in Geneva, the leaders of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia reached an agreement that all prisoners be released by 23 March, that the normalization of relations among the Balkan states be speeded up, and that commercial flights, railroad traffic, and telephone lines between Bosnia and Serbia be restored.

All the sides have promised to take specific measures so that fair elections could be held this year. They said they would prevent violence that threatens a multiethnic Bosnia. So, by 15 April, all the sides should have unhindered access to the media in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

A partial agreement has also been reached on setting up the Federation. According to the agreement, all local officials who are not implementing the agreement on the Federation should be removed.

B-H: Gen Delic on Ankara Conference, Dispute With IFOR

LD1803235596 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2100 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A one-day conference on the armament of the Bosnian federal army was held in Ankara last Friday. Countries like America, Turkey, and some other predominantly Islamic states that support that process were on one side, while on the other were countries of the European Union that are against armament. The conference was attended Commander General Rasim Delic of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, who commented on its results in a special statement for Bosnia-Herzegovina TV news. He also commented on reports that our army has not fully observed the D plus 90 deadline in the Sarajevo area. The interview was conducted by Dalida Jugo.

[Begin recording] [Jugo] American estimates say that around $800 million is necessary for the armament of the federal army. They have offered only $100 million while Turkey offered only $2 million. Will this be sufficient for the armament and training of the federal army?

[Delic] It should be said that this is a preliminary offer; the main donors have not yet revealed their figures. America expects the Islamic countries, primarily the Gulf countries, to bear the brunt of it. They sought additional plans for the armament and equipping of the federal army, or said they would arm either the federal army or the army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina through bilateral contacts. This figure is not final. The $800 million have been envisaged only for this year.

[Jugo] The D plus 90 deadline is expiring tomorrow. At an IFOR [Implementation Force] news conference this morning an IFOR spokesman said that representatives of the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina had not complied with what had been agreed. Is that true?

[Delic] First of all, it should be said that their conclusion was premature, because the D plus 90 deadline expires tomorrow. Tomorrow is tomorrow. There is still 24 hours to go.

Second, it should be said that this only refers to Sarajevo. Even if those reports were true, units located in the area of Sarajevo were not in a position to comply with the D plus 90 deadline, given that when it comes to the reintegration of Sarajevo, the handover of territory to other entities—according to that regulation, the army of the entity which receives an area cannot enter it before the D plus 91 deadline.

Even if we had wanted to dislocate our troops we would not have been able to do it until the D plus 91 days, as this is also an IFOR regulation.

The next thing to know is that we have put an essential question as to whether we should move our troops from the area of Sarajevo at all, because in accordance with Article 4.2-C of the Annex 1-A of the peace agreement—the territory of Sarajevo has been exempted—on the territory of Sarajevo the 1-km border is valid, not 2 km. This can also in some way be surmised from Annex 2, Article 4.1, where when it comes to Sarajevo, IFOR commander can exempt Sarajevo and regulate it differently.

In light of this, we demanded that Sarajevo should be exempted in this respect. Since the IFOR command declined to do it as we wanted, and interpreting the Dayton agreement in the described way, we demanded that this should be discussed in Geneva today, we demanded authentic interpretation of provisions on Sarajevo to be provided by the creators of the Dayton agreement, primarily from Gen. Clarke.

Should it happen that the interpretation advocated by IFOR command is true, I have agreed with Gen. Walker that we shall comply with the agreement in line with a plan that we are going to submit. We are not going to leave Sarajevo. We are only going to leave the 2-km zone, should we be required to do so. That zone does not encompass the entire city of Sarajevo. In that case, the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina may be in Ilidza, Hadzici, Butile, Rajlovac, Vogosca, so that we should be able to be where we need to be in ten minutes. [end recording]

B-H: IFOR 'Concerned' by Lifting of Arms Embargo

AU1503183396 Paris AFP in English 1814 GMT 15 Mar 96

[Report by Jacques Charmelot]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 15 (AFP)—Officials of the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR) said Friday [15 March] they are concerned that the lifting of a UN ban on heavy weapons sales to former Yugoslavia in June could destabilise the delicate situation in Bosnia.

The supply of light weapons, authorised Thursday after the lifting of a UN ban on light arms sales to former Yugoslavia, will make no difference in a country where "there is a Kalashnikov hidden under every mattress," one IFOR officer said.

Small arms, defined by NATO, can include machine-guns up to 14.5 mm and 60 mm mortars, which are effective against civilians but pose little danger to protected troops.

"No-one is to come and mess with IFOR," the officer said, given the force's overwhelming land and air fire power available to respond.

Small arms have always come into Bosnia, despite the UN embargo in place since 1991 and IFOR soldiers are always coming across small weapons stocks.

"IFOR discovers large stocks of weapons every day in the Sarajevo suburbs," said French IFOR Captain Jacques Fauteux.

"Every day IFOR blows up weapons and ammunitions," he said.

This Wednesday alone, artillery officers of the French Foreign Legion, based in Sarajevo, destroyed 1,101 rifle grenades, 623 hand grenades, 176 rockets, 48 anti-tank mines, 16 anti-personnel mines, 105 shells and 848 home-made explosive devices.

But, they know that three months from now, the former warring parties in Bosnia will be allowed to import weapons far more powerful than anything they can import today.

The weakest of the factions, the Bosnian Moslems, are determined not to let the opportunity pass without constructing a real army.

"The army has been working on the lists of what it needs ever since Dayton," Bosnian foreign ministry spokesman Mirza Hajric said Friday. "Our delegation went to Ankara with a clear idea of what we want."

Supporting the idea of arming the Moslem-Croat federation, the United States on Friday organised a one-day conference to win financial backing, but failed to win promises of anything more than two million dollars from Turkey in promised training.

Under the Dayton peace agreement, a limit on armaments in former Yugoslavia will be introduced in June providing for Bosnia to stablise at 30 percent of the armaments level of rump Yugoslavia.

Within Bosnia, the Moslem-Croat federation will have a superiority of two to one over the rebel Serbs in its armaments levels, but to get there it will need to import a large quantity of heavy arms.

But the perspective of the arrival of heavy weapons in large quantities "worries us," one IFOR officer said, declining to be named.

Asked what effect the arrival of heavy weapons in the country would have, IFOR spokesman Major Peter Bullock said "ask the (U.S.) State Department."

For the moment at least, IFOR officials say, it is not something they have to worry about, because it is not something that is about to happen overnight.

"There are two conditions to the heavy weapons," said one western official who declined to be named.

"The weapons have to go to the federation, which does not yet really exist and the foreign force elements in Bosnia have to be withdrawn, which they have not."

B-H: Article Views Army Plans, U.S., Turkish Role

AU1403101896 Sarajevo SVIJET in Serbo-Croatian 7 Mar 96 pp 36-37

[Article by Djuro Kozar: "Selected Professional Army"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The implementation of the peace agreement has brought about no ebb in the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. True, the demobilization has brought a deserved vacation to a part of its war units, but in the General Staff and lower commands there is a lot of work. In the interview given to the Television of Bosnia-Herzegovina, commander of the General Staff of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, Brigade General Enver Hadzihasanovic, said that the activities of the army were now focused on planning, but he also added that "paperwork will not lull us...."

Not for one moment have they neglected the main goal—the maintaining of the high combat readiness of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, for the case the other side chooses the war option once again. That is why the changes in the army are being carried out in such a way as not to influence the main tasks.

Huge Costs

In the General Staff of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army they stress that our orientation is a professional army, smaller in number, but excellently armed and trained. Its backbone would be the best soldiers of our army, matured in battles throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. Professionals would be paid by the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, and together with them there would be the recruits, between 19 and 20 years of age, who would acquire basic military knowledge, in accordance with the law.

The Commander of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, Rasim Delic, said in one of his interviews that a professional army is a state matter. In so saying, he obviously had in mind its costs, which are huge.

"The material status of professional soldiers must be one of the motives for people to choose a soldier's occupation," General Delic said. "Another motive is—being certain that a soldier can advance in his work, graduate from a university and become an officer or an expert in that army."

Whether it will come to a professional army, and how it will look—that will depend on our sponsors, the same ones that will finance the armament and equipping of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, i.e., the future Army of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. There are many countries that have rich experience in that respect, which our commanders and experts will certainly take into account. Regardless of that, it is in any case good that the best soldiers remain in the army, and that their patriotism does not become any weaker than it was in the spring of 1992.

Independently of when and in what way the army of the federation will be formed, in the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army the preparations for its reorganization have started. One move on that plane has already been made: The 7th Corps has been recalled, and its units have joined the 3d or the 5th Corps of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army. That was logical. Further steps in the reorganization are dictated by the transformation of the army from a war into a peacetime formation. So that there will be fewer soldiers and more technical military expertise.

That is why the focus could be on the ancillary and weapons units. There will doubtless be certain changes in the commands of the corps as well. There will be integration, so that it is possible that instead of the present five there will be only four corps, and that the number of divisions will be reduced, since the number of brigades has also become smaller.

Still, the real reorganization is expected after the federal army has been formed, and the whole territory that is now controlled by two armies has been covered with adequate joint formations and commands, i.e. staffs.

The American Recipe

According to the evaluations of the State Department and the Pentagon, the creation of a smaller Bosnia-Herzegovina army is anticipated, which would be an effective military power. According to those sources, there would be between 55,000 and 60,000 soldiers and officers in it.

It is obvious that by this figure the Americans in fact imply the Army of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which would be stationed on 50 percent of the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and which would comprise members of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army and of the HVO [Croatian Defense Council].

According to some sources, the peacetime professional Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina would have between 30,000 and 35,000 troops. Allegedly the present process of demobilization would continue to that level, whereas the rest of the troops would become reservists, who could be drafted if the war were to continue.

One high U.S. official recently explained in TIME that the Pentagon's goal is to form a very respectable Bosnian defense military force which would be capable of repelling all potential aggressors from its territory.

"We do not want to create a force that would defeat Serbs," he said. "We want such a mechanism that would secure peace and safety in that region."

In fact, what this U.S. officer said is what represents the basis of White House policy: The arming and equipping of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army does not represent a threat for anybody, nor does it mean the creation of formations that would defeat the army of the Serb entity. He believes that the creation of balance in armament is of crucial importance for the success of the peace agreement.

In the world there is already a lot of talk on who will finance the acquisition of machinery, armament and equipment for the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army. According to some sources, the greatest help for the acquisition of equipment and for training is expected to come from Islamic countries, particularly from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other countries rich in oil. It is also believed that a lot of help will come from Turkey, Malaysia, Indonesia, Egypt, and Pakistan. Strong participation by the United States and several European countries is also expected.

Pentagon experts have already made a "list of needs" of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, i.e., of the federal army. It includes aviation, anti-aircraft defense, ground artillery, rocket systems, and other equipment that the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army does not have now, and very much needs for defense.

The Role of Turkey

The Americans want to transfer a lot of obligations in the armament and training of the Bosnian Army to Turkey, and in Ankara this is accepted with a great sense of responsibility. A military delegation from Turkey visited Bosnia-Herzegovina recently; it obviously had the task of examining the situation and noting requests. It was for the same reason that one of the assistants of the U.S. defense minister, James Pardej [last name as published] visited Turkey. By the way, he is an expert in logistics.

It seems that all the equipment provided could be concentrated on the territory of Turkey, and from there transferred to Bosnia-Herzegovina. According to those sources, the training of our officers and soldiers would also take place in Turkey, since that country offers excellent conditions for that. After all, military experts from Albania and Macedonia have already been trained in Turkey.

All that is now being done and planned in the commands and units of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army has been adjusted to NATO doctrine. Our units will not only have modern machinery and weapons, but its use will also be different. That is why General Delic stresses that, for this reason, the additional training of soldiers and the education of officers will be necessary.

The change of doctrine in every army brings plenty of new things, and that will be the case in ours too. The General Staff of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army obviously wishes to adopt the new doctrine readily and to transfer the new concept to lower levels of command. The coming consultations on the school system and training in the army, which will take place in Zenica in March, will take into account the new requirements that have been imposed on the Bosnia-Herzegovina Army, and that demand a lot of work and responsibility from each of its members.

B-H: U.S. 'Insinuations' on Terrorism Support Criticized

AU1903101896 Sarajevo LJILJAN in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 96 p 11

[Unattributed article: "Paranoia Called Holt"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almost overnight the Bosnian regime and state as a whole has had to face insinuations that are by no means popular, nor truthful—namely that, in connection with some Islamic elements from the Near and Middle East, they support terrorism. Because of these and other "mistakes," a letter from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher recently arrived. In it we are threatened in a tone that is by no means diplomatic with some sort of sanctions. The American, or rather the Western phobia against terrorism of Islamic origin, has grown into real paranoia and schizophrenia, encouraged by the appearance of one American. A black man, a former member of the U.S. special forces, who converted to Islam and became involved with Islamic terrorist organizations, and, besides that, a (berserk) Vietnam veteran, Kevin Holt, known as Kevin Rafael Holt or Isa Abdulah Ali, is the personification of everything that is hated in the United States at this moment. He has now come here to terrorize NATO officials and security officers, who used his alleged arrival to raise security in the U.S. bases to the highest level, and to stick up photographs of this (dangerous) guy all over those camps.

Who Is Kevin?

Who is Kevin Holt, i.e., Isa Abdulah Ali? The image presented in the U.S. media is unique, which means that it comes from one source, and—it is confused. He was born in Washington, he is around thirty years old, and until recently he worked on maintaining the grounds at Howard University. Although relatively young, the media (WASHINGTON POST, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE) mentioned that he is a Vietnam veteran, although that war took place some 25 years ago, and that in 1982 he was a fighter in one Shi'ite militia unit in Beirut, which fought against the Israelis. So, he is an Islamic terrorist with a pedigree!

According to U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, NATO forces have been given the mandate to arrest Holt, as soon as he comes near one of the bases or enters it.

The Bosnian state has been more than insulted by this statement from the U.S. defense secretary. In this way, it is suggested that they do not believe Bosnia would arrest Holt and hand him over to the U.S. authorities, which none of the U.S. officials here or in the United States has asked for. Implicitly, this was a complaint that Bosnia has received one "known U.S. terrorist," and, as key evidence of that thesis, information has been published that around one hundred mujahidin are concentrated in the area of Bihac, and that recently, "heavily armed," they carried out an attack on the IFOR [Implementation Force] members, but the outcome of that attack has never been stated, so that few people know what happened and what is happening in Bosanska Krajina. Now the Bosnian Government is accused of being hesitant and uncooperative in implementing the Dayton agreement, it is being rebuked for that, and it is being blackmailed with demands for suspension of all relations with the friendly Islamic Republic of Iran. With the appearance of Holt, those pressures only gained additional encouragement.

Should one be amazed at such behavior by the West? From the beginning of the aggression the Bosniak side has been cooperative and that cooperativeness sometimes bordered on suicidal acts.

One Should Not Be Amazed

Never, by a single move, has the Bosnian side given any grounds for suspecting it is orientating itself towards terrorism. And now, almost overnight, we have been reduced to the rank of the countries that support terrorism. As if it was us who terrified the world in 1992 pulling black socks over our faces [Serb barricades in Sarajevo in the spring of 1992], as if it was us who organized a number of attacks on soldiers and vehicles of the United Nations, robbery, maltreatment, and assassination attempts on them or on the people in their vehicles, and, as if it was us who—finally—tied UN soldiers to posts, using them as living shields. There are many more examples, but—as far as the West is concerned—there is no point in citing them. Kevin Holt is perhaps a terrorist. But, what would he be doing in Bosnia when he can try to realize his crazy ideas in his own country. On the other hand, it could also be the case that Holt has been infiltrated so that the Bosnian side be shown what the possibilities of Western powerholders are.

Bosnia is a serious state in which not one terrorist act has been recorded, and anybody who dares act in that way must be prepared to face, in the first place, the Bosnian authorities.

B-H: Iran Denies Existence of Training Camps, Troops

AU1803203896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Sarajevo today issued a public statement, which, among other things, says:

The Islamic Republic of Iran has been honored to have been in a position to help the people of this country in their struggle against an all-out aggression during the last several difficult years and in the victorious defense of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In line with the same policy, we state that we do not have a single remaining military training camp or a single soldier in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The unfounded propaganda over the last few days about the presence of Iranian soldiers in Bosnia-Herzegovina has been an excuse to delay and obstruct the complete implementation of the peace agreement.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined and prepared to help the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina in reconstruction and economic development as it has hitherto, says the statement by the Iranian Embassy.

B-H: Commentary Views 'Dilemma' of Iran, U.S. Ties

AU1303184296 Sarajevo OSLOBODJENJE (Bosnian) in Serbo-Croatian 6 Mar 96 p 1

[Commentary by Ibrahim Prohic: "Politics and Dollars"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A government delegation has returned from a two-day visit to Iran satisfied. Some concrete agreements were reached, which will soon be turn into detailed bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Economic cooperation will be institutionalized by establishing an office in Sarajevo, by founding specialized funds and a joint venture bank, and so on. It sounds attractive, but....

In the Bosnian drama, for each plus there is at least one minus. Apart from Iran, there is the United States in the world, too, and we know what relations between them are like. In global diplomacy, there is a rule: "My friend's friend is my friend, and vice versa." Bosnia has been trying, in spite of that rule, to balance on the tightrope of antagonisms between Washington and Tehran. President Izetbegovic has been proudly emphasizing that Bosnia is the only country to have friendly relations with both the United States and Iran. That was supposed to confirm the high skill and strategic wisdom of Bosnia-Herzegovina policy and diplomacy. If it succeeds, it will deserve all credit. It would be something really fine, but the question is: Is it possible? Is it wisdom, acrobatics, or illusionism?

Prime Minister Muratovic officially had two objectives: to thank Iran for all the friendship and types of help, and to obtain economic help for the reconstruction of the country. Political motives were not mentioned. Muratovic has been building the image of a manager from the very beginning and he has been consistent in this also regarding this visit. But, it is clear that economics and politics do not go hand in hand, and the meeting in Iran is no exception. Everybody is quiet about the political dimensions precisely because of the awkwardness of the totality of the relations in this Washington-Sarajevo-Tehran triangle, but it is logical to try to devise a formula for something that should glue wood and glass.

The general public does not know what kind of and what quantity of help Bosnia has received from the United States and Iran, but it is certain that the help has been great from both sides. It is unclear to what extent that help was conditioned or how much the war and the objectively dramatic situation in Bosnia made the United States soften its attitude. Recently, there has been great pressure from Washington on Bosnia to reduce its links with Iran. There are threats, too; for instance, that otherwise the Federation Army will be denied help. Can Bosnia give up Iran? It is a moral, political, and pragmatic dilemma. Is it possible to find a formula that would provide political support from the United States and money from the Islamic countries?

B-H: Sacirbegovic Interviewed on Ties to Iran, FRY

AU1403151996 Sarajevo DNEVNI AVAZ in Serbo-Croatian 8, 9 Mar 96

[Report on an interview in two installments with Muhamed Sacirbegovic, Bosnian ambassador to the United Nations, in Sarajevo; date not given: "Bosnia-Herzegovina Is a Bridge Between America and Iran"]

[8 Mar p 8]

[FBIS Translated Text] Muhamed Sacirbegovic, ambassador of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the United Nations and special envoy of President Izetbegovic in the implementation of the Dayton accords, talked in the building of the Presidency of Bosnia-Herzegovina with members of the editorial board of DNEVNI AVAZ.

The first topic of our conversation popped up spontaneously: criticism from the West regarding friendly relations between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Iran. Sacirbegovic says on this:

"The first thing we ought to understand is how the Iranian revolution began. In that situation, more than 50 Americans were taken hostage and held in the embassy. America is allergic to Iran also because Iran was unwavering in its aim. Which means that even some quite normal relations that can be expected between Iran and Bosnia-Herzegovina may cause an American reaction."

Goodwill

"As soon as we saw how the situation was developing, we took action to explain our relations with Iran. I wanted to point out that we should be distinguished from them [Iran] in certain points in which it is possible, and still be able to maintain friendly relations. We told the Americans that we could be a bridge between the United States and Iran, but it takes good will on both sides for such a bridge to function.

"I talked about this with many U.S. politicians.

"We see Iran as a country that has its embassy here, and there is also the matter of business and humanitarian cooperation. The West, perhaps, views all this as Iran's attempt to infiltrate its politics into Bosnia-Herzegovina and indoctrinate the Bosnian people. If a European country exerts influence through its work, its humanitarian organizations, and cultural programs, other countries have the same right.

"I want to be clear: Our policy is that we belong to the West in terms of the structure of our defense and our European integration, while on the other hand, as a nation, we belong to the entire world. We are an entity that combines in itself features of both East and West. If the United States understands this, then it will understand our principles of multiculturalism, on which America itself rests."

Friends in Need

Answering a question about some blackmail attempts, according to which Bosnia-Herzegovina will not receive any aid unless it curbs its relations with Iran, Sacirbegovic said:

"First of all, this has to do with a lot of prejudice. I was very surprised when somebody told me at the Ramadan reception that the crescent moon flag reflected something all too Islamic. Somebody recorded this and presented it to the United States as a sign of Islamic and Iranian influence. As a man who grew up in the United States and took part many times in Christmas and Eastern receptions, I was very offended. Considering my own experience, I assessed the Ramadan reception at the National Theater as a very West-oriented event. If the flag is a sign of fundamentalist influence, then some people do not know what they are talking about.

"As a diplomat, I consider that our relationship with Iran is very important. First of all, Iran is a country that helped us in our most difficult moments. Iran is one of the few countries ready to help us. On the other hand, the West knew they were helping us, and it let them do so. The West wants us now to shut those doors completely. If we expect other countries to consider us as a true and dedicated friend, they ought to behave appropriately toward anybody who has proved to be our friend as well. America and the West will learn what kind of friend they have in Bosnia through the way we behave toward Iran.

"Iran is still ready to be our partner in humanitarian, economic, and cultural matters. We ought to have a chance to be able to analyze all such proposals, and harmonize them with our own needs."

[9 Mar p 9]

[FBIS Translated Text]

Fence Around Belgrade

"We are certainly on a path toward European and Western integration, which means when military cooperation is in question, we do not have in mind only what the Dayton accord is bringing to us, but also our integration in Europe. Almost all of the Islamic countries support our NATO integration. Why? Bosnia-Herzegovina is not interesting to them only as a country that would move toward the East, but also as a European country, European nation, and European culture with Islamic elements. They view Bosnia like a country that may strengthen their own relations with the Western world and organizations such as NATO or the EU. Such links are now either loose or nonexistent. However, it seems that a new conflict between some Eastern and Western civilizations is arising. Many, in both the Islamic and the Western worlds, understand that this is really not supposed to be a conflict between Islam and Christianity, and that mutual confidence ought to be developed.

Serbian Lobby

[DNEVNI AVAZ] How great is the influence of the Serbian lobby in America in all this?

[Sacirbegovic] When we say that America is allergic to something, then it does not take long for it to start coughing. That lobby may be very weak and uninfluential, but in such circumstances it takes just a few germs in the air to cause coughing. We ought to bear in mind that this process did not start with Bosnia, but rather that Bosnia happened to be in the middle of it. We ought to know that the only community in America that helped us a lot in this war, namely, the Jewish community, does not consider Iran its friend.

[DNEVNI AVAZ] What are the present and the future relations between Sarajevo and Belgrade like?

[Sacirbegovic] In the White House and the State Department two parallel policies are being pursued toward Belgrade. The second one started approximately a year ago, and is based on cooperation with Milosevic as a realistic and influential force that influences stability and the peace process as well. However, it is apparent that Belgrade is not using peace as a way toward Europe and democracy. To Belgrade, peace is an opportunity to get rid of the pressure, to obstruct the free media and some organizations like the Soros Foundation, and to arrest opposition members (several people from Sandzak, political prisoners, have still not been released). Instead of opening a democratic political process, they are closing it. They still do not recognize the Tribunal in The

Hague. However, I think that the course will change, as the implementation of the Dayton accords is making progress. Then these other questions will become more important.

We Are Victims

"I believe we should not accept any conditions for the normalization of relations with Belgrade. We care for the normalization, but it is clear that Serbia and Montenegro are going in a direction different from ours. We are heading for further integration in Europe, and we accept all criticisms about our political process and relations, as well as about the military situation in our country, whereas Belgrade is going in a different direction. Belgrade has demanded from us several concessions as a condition for its establishing diplomatic relations with us. It is a question of principle whether they are supposed to make conditions to a victim, and demand legitimization from the victim. According to Belgrade's demands, we should accept Yugoslavia's continuity and drop our charges against it. Such disputes before the International Tribunal are long-lasting, they can last for as many as five years. We can expect that the Tribunal will, say, indict 100 Serbs, 30 Croats, and 10 Bosniaks for war crimes. The world will conclude then that here we had a civil war between religions and communities. That was neither a religious nor a civil war, but rather an ideological one, and not between the Serbs and the Bosniaks, even though it appeared so. It should be made clear to the world that we are not a crazy nation that quarreled within itself, but we are a victim of a fascist ideology, of a communist system turned fascist in order to survive, and we are a victim of an aggressive genocide.

Everything we sacrificed, we sacrificed for two reasons: In order to survive, and to be able to say we are what we are. To say that we are a free, open, multiethnic, and multicultural community. Karadzic, Mladic, and Krajisnik are forcing Serbs out of the Sarajevo suburbs so they can show this war in history as a supposedly ethnic one."

B-H: Commentary Views Izetbegovic Role, Absence

AU1203081496 Sarajevo SVIJET in Serbo-Croatian 29 Feb 96 pp 12-13

[Commentary by Gojko Beric: "The Temptation of Power"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The poor health of the 70-year-old President Izetbegovic has become the subject of new political analyses, based on the presumption that he will not be able to perform his duties for a long time. Various, mostly negative, implications are mentioned, starting from the banal question as to how the state presidency will function in that case, to evaluations according to which the entire power could practically be taken over by one of the shadow authorities—by which it is meant the military leadership, or the main staff of the ruling party, which is more or less one and the same thing.

First Among Unequals

Alluding to the big and small dictators of this century, Izetbegovic once said about himself that he was no "leader," but only "one ordinary president." Izetbegovic indeed does not display the characteristics of a leader. But he has grown into a leading political and moral authority of the Bosniak people, and in the sphere of power he has become an institution in himself. It is indisputable that Izetbegovic is aware of that. He has never cared a lot about the parliament or the state presidency, particularly since, after the first clumsy lessons, he mastered the technique of absolute power. When it looked as if his ratings were falling, it soon turned out that that was an illusion. He smoothly won the duel with Silajdzic, and came out of it with no visible scratches.

Izetbegovic has always been obsessed with the rule and the power of his own party, and much less with the legitimate institutions of power. That is one of the key reasons for the nearly permanent crisis in the work of the state presidency, where Izetbegovic is "the first among unequals." That multiparty and multinational team is in fact a mosaic of one-party central power, a false sunflower of democratic pluralism, which serves as a facade to the West. Izetbegovic has a habit of saying that the party affairs are successfully managed by Edhem Bicakcic, the government by Haris Silajdzic, and the presidency by Ejup Ganic. This statement shows that the ruling party does not wish to share the power with anybody. The same goes for Mr. Izetbegovic. Aware of his inviolability, already two years ago, on the edge of indignation, he said: "The SDA [Party of Democratic Action] has the absolute predominance in the parliament, and I am the president of that party."

If personal disposition does not influence the mechanism of power, then it is of no importance. However, that is not the case with Izetbegovic. De Gaulle appreciated only few politicians, "those who possess the sentimental feeling for the tragedy of life." Alija Izetbegovic possesses that quality, though maybe not in the sense meant by De Gaulle. His tolerance and the ability to resist the temptations of hatred can hardly be disputed. Among the present presidents of the former Yugoslav republics, he is the only one who has never been a communist. He is the only one of them who before the multiparty elections had nothing to do with the regime as such. And finally, he was in prison for nine years, longer than many other political prisoners in the former Yugoslavia.

Emotions and Ratio

When he came to power, Izetbegovic did not prosecute communists. He did not try to be a bigger anticommunist than many former communists. He brought into the presidency several people who in the sunset of the former regime had been in high positions. If in that sense he was tolerant, it is no wonder that he also tolerates the right-wing faction in his own party. In any case, he is the only authority who can keep the extremists in the SDA under control. However, the origin of his tolerance is not of a political, but of a religious nature. Namely, this is how Izetbegovic reacts to the statement of a STERN journalist that he is known as a Muslim of European tradition and tolerance: "My tolerance is not of European but of Muslim origin. If I am tolerant, I am that in the first place as a Muslim, and then as a European."

To the question as to what he thought of Izetbegovic, Haris Silajdzic said to OSLOBODJENJE, immediately upon taking up the post of prime minister, that he was a good man, but that he was not talented in politics. Few people knew that already then there was a family quarrel between them, a conflict of two political philosophies. Silajdzic was right in a sense. To be a good man does not mean anything in politics. In comparison to the perfidious Milosevic and to Tudjman, the constantly sulky former Tito general, the Bosnian president looks too mild. He claims that he often used to get ill when he would go to meetings with them. However, politics is not based on emotions, but on a rational approach. Having decided to function as an institution, which instantly endangered the few democratic principles left, Izetbegovic installed his personal qualities as the main levers of his own mechanism, and they are colored by a true piety. In the war that had some advantages, but it had disadvantages as well. Izetbegovic also effectively kicked some goals into his own net—from the overt outburst of emotions in meetings with Iranian officials, to the famous letter in which Santa Claus was attacked. Not all of these scores against himself were his own; some had obviously been prepared by people from his surroundings, but international referees regularly marked them beside Izetbegovic's name. With his statements he sometimes confused both those committed to life together and those against it. From the standpoint of politics as a craft, he certainly deserves a lot of criticism. On the other hand, his failures were also a result of his personal qualities and shortcomings.

The Personal Drama

Izetbegovic's political career carries a touch of big personal drama. French author and philosopher Bernard Henry Levy presents Izetbegovic as a melancholy commander: "He is neither Napoleon nor De Gaulle, but he performs the role of an army commander, which he took up against his own will, honorably." In this war Izetbegovic used to say about himself that he was a soldier. For a majority of the Bosniak people, he was a rescuer. However, some do not think so. In the West many see him as a Muslim fundamentalist. He is believed to have the intention of creating an Islamic republic in the heart of Europe, which he has denied several times, but in a way that still leaves some doubts. Thus, in an interview to one western paper, he says that that would be a "big risk."

His statement to a journalist of the London TIMES some fifteen months ago also deserves attention: "I am committed to a unified Bosnia, and a unified Bosnia—as it is multinational—cannot be an Islamic state. Only a divided Bosnia can be that, and it is precisely this that some European governments are working to try to do."

Maybe it will remain a secret what kind of Bosnia Izetbegovic envisaged before this war, and what kind he now envisages. At home he was exposed to many, sometimes contradictory, criticisms. He was criticized for having been too yielding before the pressures of the international community, which de facto carried out the ethnic division of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Izetbegovic struggled the best he could. It is hard to say whether he had any possibility of doing things better than he has done.

If because of his bad health he is forced to leave the political scene, that will create consequences that at the moment nobody can foresee.

B-H: Silajdzic Says Dayton Accord 'Collapsing'

MM1503154496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 15 Mar 96 p 8

[Report by As'ad Taha and Jamil Rofa'il in Sarajevo: "Silajdzic Tells AL-HAYAH: Bosnia Is In Danger; I Am Trying To Form a Party To Fight Partitioning"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Former Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic has denied some Bosnian newspapers' accusations that he is receiving financial support from the United States.

In a statement to AL-HAYAH, Silajdzic said that he refuses any foreign financial support because he deals [only] with domestic policy.

However, he welcomed any political support from the United States which "is supporting me in line with its interests, and I deal with U.S. policy in the light of Bosnian interests." He added: "I also welcome any European or Islamic support. We know how to safeguard our interests and independence, and we have performed this task very well."

Silajdzic strongly attacked the Bosnian Croats, saying that the areas under their control are an extension of the "greater Croatia" idea at the expense of Bosnia, adding: "In fact, so far, the Washington agreement has not seen the light. In Bosnia we have two blocs, one Croatian defended by the Croatian militias, and the other Muslim, protected by the Bosnian Army. If the situation remains thus, it will mean the beginning of the end for Bosnia and the Islamic presence here."

The former Bosnian prime minister criticized the Bosnian leadership for making many concessions to the right-wing Croatian trends which "are doing what they like in Bosnia, as if it was the Croats who fought for us and defended us, when in fact they are the ones who destroyed our country, killed our people, and left not a single mosque standing in their areas. We now refer to these people as political partners."

Silajdzic said that the Dayton agreement is collapsing and that Bosnia-Herzegovina is being partitioned. He said that the agreement takes into account two possibilities: Unity, partitioning, and leaving the sides to decide their position on the ground [sentence as published]. He added that "Bosnia is being divided into three ethnic regions, and therefore the ethnic conflict will not stop at Bosnia's borders but will extend to Kosovo, Macedonia, and perhaps to Greece and Turkey. This partitioning is the reward for those who killed 200,000 citizens, a legitimate cover for fascism and mass extermination, and is contrary to the objective we have spent four years fighting for."

During the interview in his new office in the capital, Silajdzic told AL-HAYAH that he will soon announce the formation of his party. He explained that this party's main lines focus on safeguarding Bosnia-Herzegovina's unity, democracy, and freedoms.

He strongly criticized the Democratic Action Party, led by President Alija Izetbegovic, saying that Bosnia is still suffering from the vestiges of communist rule and that "those who are in power stay there too long, until there is no more competition, which means we are suffering from political monopoly."

He violently attacked Bosnian Vice President Ejup Ganic and current Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic, saying: "I do not trust those who switch allegiances, one allegiance during the daytime and another at night, and those former senior communists of the former era."

Silajdzic stressed that he has every respect for President Izetbegovic whom he described as "a great fighter for Bosnia, freedom, and Islam. However, the people around him are opportunists who follow, who do not and cannot lead. I believe that Bosnia is in danger, and I must act."

Silajdzic believes that the threat of division between Muslims is unlikely and that he favors pluralism which is the core of European policy. He reiterated that he is absolutely confident that his party will win by a landslide in the upcoming elections. [passage omitted]

B-H: Ganic Demands End to 'Speculation' Over Country

AU1803152896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 18 Mar 96

[Report by Semra Zoranovic-Koso from Geneva]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Ejup Ganic, member of the state presidency, vice president of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and leader of our delegation, which is staying at the Intercontinental Hotel, has since last night met the U.S. delegation three times and spoken to Richard Holbrooke's successor John Kornblum and John Shattuck, deputy secretary of state for human rights issues. All these meetings have been to prepare for today's final bilateral talks at the U.S. mission.

Following these meetings and before the start of the official talks, in a brief statement to Radio Television Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ejup Ganic said that the time had come to start punishing all those who are not meeting the commitments made in Rome on 18 February. We will demand, Ganic also said, that a body be formed to monitor the implementation of the federation agreement. This body would also settle the issues on which the federation is failing now. These are the cantons, [word indistinct] customs, the issue of the freedom of movement. The formation of a body to monitor the federation would represent a new significant impulse in the overall peace process. We have come to Geneva to say that there has been enough speculation over Bosnia, Ejup Ganic said. We are a sovereign state and we are making decisions that are in the best interest of Bosnia-Herzegovina. We also ask that the United States support our country's arming and training program, as well as the reconstruction program.

When it comes to relations with Serbia, Ganic announced a future normalization of relations between the two countries but only to the extent of establishing civilian traffic. [passage omitted]

B-H: Abdic's Political Comeback Viewed

AU1903092696 Sarajevo SVIJET in Serbo-Croatian 14 Mar 96 pp 24-25

[Article by Jelena Lovric: "The Man for all Games"]

[FBIS Translated Text] One month ago the Higher Court of Mostar registered the Democratic People's Union [DNZ], a party with its headquarters in Mostar. There is not a more precise address, and the party will be active in the "territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina." Fikret Abdic is its chairman, and Ibrahim Dedovic its secretary. The aims of the party—as can be read in the registration document—are "the development of the achievements of modern politics as in the European democracies and in the advanced democratic parliamentary world on the basis of the general and equal right to vote; the achievement of full equality of economic conditions in Bosnia-Herzegovina with those in the democratic world, as well as other aims within political and social and economic life, which are defined by the DNZ statutes, its political orientation, and program." The Court's decision on the registration was signed by Stjepan Mikulic, the Court's president.

Dedovic, who showed the document to reporters at the Kupljensko camp, claims that the party has 20,000 signed up members. He pointed out that the establishment of the party had enabled Abdic to become involved in the peace process. He did not hide the fact that the party had far-reaching plans for the election.

Protection by the President

It can hardly be imagined that Zagreb did not participate in the registration of Abdic's party in Mostar. Although Sarajevo is asking for his extradition—in order to try him—the controversial Babo enjoys the protection of the Croatian leadership. The announcement of his comeback corresponds to Tudjman's statements some time ago. After the failure in Western Bosnia Abdic found shelter in Zagreb, which the Croatian president explained by saying that it should be made possible for him to engage in business, and after the war—if he so wished—he could become active in politics.

The announcement of Abdic's return means that—in spite of everything he did and in spite of the reputation he has acquired over the last several years—he is still a secret ace of the Croatian politics. Although he repeatedly disguised and camouflaged himself, Abdic's predominant role during the war was that of the man for Croatian-Serbian settlements. The inhabitants of Velika Kladusa—with memories of the region's prewar prosperity, for which that economic and political master must undoubtedly be given credit—still have a special relationship toward him. Depending on one's point of view this could, on the one hand, be interpreted as devotedness, and, on the other hand, as his manipulation of the unlucky. The fact that they were not exposed to the horrors of the war for a very long time is also a result of Abdic's acrobatic skills. He was the man who exported Croatian oil to the Serbs, he was the man who was the point for trading between the Serbs and the Croats.

As both a Croat and a Serb—the nationality being chosen according to need, but in most cases both at the same time—Abdic is still the most consistent in opposing Sarajevo. He should have been used by his sponsors to destroy Izetbegovic, but by entering into an open conflict with the legal Bosnian leadership he succeeded only in becoming a traitor to his own people and his home country.

Disastrous Balance

Regardless of his prewar merits, this is the balance Abdic is leaving the war with. Neither do the Croats have any reason to trust him. Although he decided to support the criminals from Knin at the key moment, he was quite well cared for in Zagreb afterwards. Showing an incredible resistance to moral scruples, he supported a man who turned his back on his home-country, who cooperated with the biggest criminals [not further specified], and in the end he attacked Croatia too. He was given shelter in elite Zagreb hotels, in villas along the coast, not out of love, but—it is obvious now—with some secret calculations.

He is now being pulled out of a sleeve like an ace. Fikret Abdic is the card for the loosening and consequent division of Bosnia. This is the mutual aim of both Abdic and of those who push him forward. This is the only way for him to regain political power. Although he had incomparably greater ambitions at the level of the complete Bosnia-Herzegovina, a victorious return to western Bosnia is possible only if it remains far away from Sarajevo. That is why he insists on autonomy there. Tudjman supports this idea fervently. He would like to have somebody in the Bihac canton who will have more contacts with Zagreb than with Sarajevo. Therefore Abdic will—as can be seen—help in the election. That there is closeness is also suggested by the party's name. The Democratic People's Community irresistibly reminds one of the Croatian Democratic Community.

Ethnic Separation

Intrigues with Abdic seem like a mistake in Tudjman's politics of ethnic purism. Croatia has not abandoned the idea of division into national territories in Bosnia. This can be seen from the constant insistence on ethnic cantons and the hysterical prosecution of any form of coexistence. The Croats required in Rome recently that the canton borders be changed in such a way that out of the two cantons in central Bosnian one Croatian one and one Muslim one be created. Sarajevo refused such an arrangement, and it was agreed that an arbitrator make the decision. Croatia has not even introduced the multiethnic society into its diplomatic vocabulary. Any form of mixture between nations or religions is being sabotaged. Spokesmen of Croatian politics have even assessed Koschnick's plan for a unitary Mostar as an attempt to create "Yugoslavia on a small scale."

Just as it was claimed of Bosnia that it was "a portable Yugoslavia"—which suggested the impossibility of its existence—this assessment is now being transferred to any "mixed situation." Yugoslavia and multiethnicity are being made equal. It can be concluded on the basis of the fact that Yugoslavia collapsed as a multiethnic community that the coexistence of members of various nations is impossible everywhere, now and in the future. Things have been led to absurdity. If the attempt to unite Mostar is tantamount to an attempt to create some kind of new Yugoslavia, this will be the case with any mixed marriage tomorrow. This means that any man with some "[ethnically] unclean blood" in him is Yugoslavia on a small scale. Such constructions serve only one purpose—the rationalization (if it is not too ironical to mention ratio in this context!) of the project of ethnically clean states. And to provoke the division of Bosnia-Herzegovina into three ethnic parts. All the things that have been going on lately, from Mostar to Sarajevo, should prove that Croats and Bosniaks cannot come to terms so that a separation is the best solution.

Bihac is an exception in that logic of the ethnic separation. How come that the Croats refuse to mix with the Muslims in Mostar, whereas Zagreb is at the same time inclined to seize a predominantly Muslim area [Bihac]? This should first of all be interpreted in the light of "filling the Croatian pretzel." If it serves important national aims, Tudjman is prepared to accept even non-Croats. Everything is arranged for such a developmen. The Muslim canton of Bihac borders on the one side on Croatia and on the other it is pressed by the "Serbian entity" and the new Croatian canton made up of municipalities of Grahovo, Drvar, and Glamoc, which were earlier inhabited predominantly by the Serbs. The Croatian side insisted on getting that area, which is now being quickly populated by Croats. It has to be pointed out, however, that Croatia was also ready to return Mrkonjic Grad and Sipovo to the Serbs without any problems. The Croatian Army held these towns, but it decided to give them up in Dayton. The consequence is that the Muslims in the Bihac pocket are surrounded by other nationalities, so that there is no Muslim connection between the Bihac pocket and the mixed cantons in central Bosnia. It is considered that the communication was cut off on purpose.

If three ethnically homogeneous areas are formed, Bihac will become a Muslim island. Such isolation of the western Bosnian Muslims from central Bosnia should orientate them toward Croatia. A certain degree of autonomy could play a wonderful role in the estrangement from Sarajevo and coming closer to Zagreb. Abdic's role should be to help in the breaking up of these relations. "Babe" could turn his role into the position of governor of "the Turkish Croatia."

B-H: OSCE Opens Tuzla Office To Prepare for Elections

AU1803210096 Paris AFP in English 2018 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 18 (AFP)—The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) opened an office Monday [18 March] in the northern Bosnian town of Tuzla, to prepare for elections due here by September, an OSCE official said.

Sir Kenneth Scott, the senior deputy head of the the OSCE mission in Bosnia, met the mayor of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic, to discuss preparations for the elections, the official said.

The OSCE northeast regional office, opened in Tuzla Monday, will coordinate election work and deal with complaints from interested parties, Scott said.

The OSCE has been tasked with supervising regional and national elections due in Bosnia by September under the Bosnian peace accord signed in Paris in December.

The centre will oversee the work of OSCE field officers in Tuzla, Vares, Zenica, Srebrenica and Orasje, Scott said.

B-H: Muslim Troops Remain in Sarajevo Separation Zone

LD1803172296 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1545 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 18 (TANJUG)—The Bosnian Muslim government does not seem to be moving its 4,500 troops from the zone of separation in Sarajevo as the Dayton Agreement requires to be done by March 20, the international peace Implementation Force (IFOR) in Bosnia said Monday.

"Bosnian (Muslim) political and military representatives have approached (NATO) to make a case for being allowed to leave some troops and military facilities within the Sarajevo zone," IFOR Spokesman Maj. Simon Haselock told reporters. He said that the request had been turned down.

"Clearly, there is absolutely no need for these troops to be in Sarajevo. They will violate not only the letter but the spirit of the peace agreement," news agencies quoted Haselock as saying.

Muslim troops are still present in the Marshal Tito army barracks in Sarajevo, which is inside the zone of separation that needs to be demilitarized by Wednesday.

News agencies said that the Bosnian Serbs and Croats had fulfilled their obligations and that the Bosnian Muslim army was the only side refusing to abide by the plan.

The Dayton Peace Agreement stipulates that the two Bosnian entities—the Republika Srpska and the Muslim-Croat Federation—be separated by a four-km-wide and 1,000-km-long zone of separation, which also touches the Sarajevo area.

The requirement has mostly been honoured, with the exception of Sarajevo.

Under the Dayton Agreement, troops of the former warring parties in Bosnia are banned from wearing arms and uniforms and performing any kind of military activity inside the zone of separation.

The Republika Srpska has fulfilled its most difficult obligation by withdrawing its army and police from four Serb municipalities of Sarajevo.

The last one, Grbavica, is due to change hands and come under the rule of the Muslim-Croat Federation on Tuesday.

However, the withdrawal of Serb army and police has resulted in an exodus of Serb population from Sarajevo, so that barely a few thousand Serbs have remained in the five municipalities.

B-H: NATO Says Army Agrees To Demilitarize Sarajevo

AU1903111196 Paris AFP in English 1037 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sarajevo, March 19 (AFP)—The Bosnian Government army has agreed to withdraw its troops from demilitarized zones round Sarajevo but has not revealed the details of its pullout plan, NATO officials said Tuesday [19 March].

Major Simon Haselock, a spokesman for the NATO-led peace Implementation Force (IFOR), said the soldiers would have to withdraw from demilitarised areas set out under the Dayton accord and including areas of Sarajevo.

"The BiH (Bosnian) army has agreed to table a plan to explain how they are going to comply and along what timescale," Haselock said.

A meeting would take place between the commander of IFOR ground troops, General Michael Walker, and the Bosnian army chief Rasim Delic, Tuesday afternoon, Haselock said.

Under the terms of the Bosnian peace treaty, soldiers of either former warring party are not allowed in demilitarised areas two kilometres (1.2 miles) on either side of the former frontlines.

However, some 5,000 soldiers of the mainly-Moslem Bosnian Government have stayed in Sarajevo, mostly in the Tito barracks and in army headquarters in the town.

IFOR would ensure that the troops withdrew, Haselock said. "We have a wide range of options from continuing political and rhetorical pressure right up to enforcement action," he said.

B-H: Sarajevo, Mostar Authorities Prevent Refugees' Return

LD1903131496 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1216 GMT 19 Mar 96

["Pool" item by Vera Djurovic]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 19 (TANJUG)—The Muslim-Croat Federation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and international mediators, too, are using red tape to bring in question the implementation of the Dayton provisions guaranteeing the return home to refugees and displaced persons.

Federation authorities first compelled scores of thousands of Serbs to flee the Sarajevo municipalities turned over by the Serb side to the federation in keeping with the Dayton peace accords. International observers, themselves, have witnessed the looting of Serb homes and harassment of Serbs who wanted to remain in their homes despite the transfer of authority.

Federation authorities next set conditions which refugees had to meet in order to exercise their right to their flats in Sarajevo and gave them only nine days within which to send in their requests. Refugees have to present a batch of papers, including proof of having informed authorities about leaving their flats, which makes the return practically impossible.

Another major obstacle in the way of the Dayton accords is the city of Mostar in Herzegovina, divided between Croats and Muslims after about 40,000 Serbs were expelled in 1992.

The European Union has printed a form which Mostar refugees have to fill out stating whether they prefer to return home or receive compensation for their property. The E.U. first insisted that requests be filed within nine days after the agreement on Mostar became effective on Feb. 18, but it distributed tte form only in one of its member countries. Yugoslavia, which has a score of thousands of Mostar refugees, mostly Serbs, did not receive a single copy of the form. The forms eventually arrived via a third country. The association for assistance to refugees and displaced persons in Yugoslavia has complained to the E.U., insisting that the deadline for sending in the filled-out forms be extended to two months. The E.U. replied that the definitive deadline was March 20.

The very parties which have pledged to implement the Dayton provisions on the return of refugees and displaced persons, the most sensitive part of the agreement, have obviously rushed to shut the door and make the return impossible.

B-H: EU: Joint Muslim-Croat Patrols Suspended in Mostar

AU1803143996 Paris AFP in English 1424 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, March 18 (AFP)—Joint patrols between this southern Herzegovina city's Moslem and Croat police forces were suspended on Monday following disagreements between the two, the European Union police in charge of overseeing the patrols said.

An EU police officer who spoke on condition of anonymity said the suspension was related to a series of arrests carried out by both sides over the weekend.

The EU officer said three Moslems were arrested late Saturday in the western, mainly Croat part of the city following a blast that destroyed a shop. Croatian police said the trio were carrying explosives when arrested.

Several hours later, officers in the mainly Moslem eastern part of the city arrested a Croat driver for unknown reasons, leading his employer on Monday to threaten blocking off the western part of the city with his trucks if the man was not freed.

The EU officer said the two sides were meeting on Monday to try and reach a solution agreeable to everyone and the patrols were meanwhile suspended.

He said he suspected the disagreements were in reality linked to opposition towards the joint police force.

Mostar came under EU administration in July 1994 following 11 months of fierce fighting between the city's Moslem and Croat population. Since then the EU has been trying to unify the town and one of its main objectives has been the formation of a joint police force.

B-H: Croats Threaten To Cut Water Supply in Mostar

AU1803200796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[Report by Mirsad Behram and Faruk Kajtaz from Mostar]

[FBIS Translated Text] It all started two days ago when Croat police on the night of 16 March arrested three young men from the eastern part of Mostar who had crossed into the western part of Mostar by car late at night. According to information from the Mostar police station, the fact that the Croat police checked the car with the three young men after curfew is not the problem. The problem is that the young men were unjustifiably detained for too long and were also physically maltreated.

Yesterday a Croat from Grude was arrested in the eastern part of Mostar, which made the authorities in the Croat-controlled part of the city limit the mixed police patrols to the central city zone and close traffic on the route from the EU headquarters via the boulevard to the Hasan Brkic Bridge.

The situation in the city normalized early this afternoon. All the detained persons were released and, according to Howard Fox, WEU [Western European Union] police spokesman in Mostar, the mixed patrols have again taken up duty in the entire city of Mostar. According to him, the freedom of movement has not been endangered and is going on unhindered.

On top of all this, the citizens in the eastern part of Mostar are as of today threatened with a cut in drinking water supplies. The Water Company from the Croat-controlled part of the city announced several days ago that it would cut off water supplies to the eastern part of Mostar as of today at 1500 [1400 GMT]. This decision is justified by allegedly unpaid bills for the use of water from the Studenac spring. The EU Administration has not been consulted as it should have been, since the spring is a part of the central city district over which the Koschnick's administration has full power.

At the time of filing this report, at approximately 1800, the announced water cutoff has not happened. We do not know whether the Water Company from the western part of Mostar has changed its mind or whether some agreement has been reached. As for the Bosniak side, it believes that all decisions concerning the Studenac spring have to be made in coordination with the EU Administration and that the two sides in Mostar should pay for the real cost of the production and distribution of drinking water. The Bosniak side also demands that the price of a cubic meter of water be determined by European experts and that water meters be urgently built in the main transit water pipes so as to establish the amount of water distributed to the eastern part of Mostar.

B-H: European Police Deny Mostar Patrols Suspended

AU1903095896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Captain Hans (?Merid), one of the police commanders of the West European Union in Mostar, last night denied the AFP report that the operations of the joint police patrols in Mostar have been suspended, HABENA reports.

According to Captain (?Merid), owing to several arrests and abductions in Mostar over the past few days, the number of joint patrols was reduced in Mostar until 1500 [1400 GMT] yesterday. Regular patrols resumed at 1500. All those arrested, three Bosniaks and two Croats, were released in Mostar yesterday.

B-H: Outgoing EU Administrator Views Situation

LD1603230396 Sarajevo Televizija Bosne i Hercegovine in Serbo-Croatian 2100 GMT 16 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Hans Koschnick, shortly before his departure from the post of the EU administrator of Mostar, speaks on the current situation in Mostar for the Bosnia-Herzegovina television. Faruk Kajtaz conducted the interview:

[Begin recording] [Kajtaz] You took over authority over the central zone in Mostar by your decree.

[Koschnick, in English with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation] Yes. I have taken this responsibility in line with the Memorandum on Understanding, which says that I can have complete or partial authority, with the Dayton Agreement and Rome Agreement.

[Kajtaz] Do you propose that the authorities now in power in the district should remain so until elections?

[Koschnick] If Mayor Brajkovic [of West Mostar] has different views he should refer to the federal government, president, and deputy president of the Federation, and see what is right and what is wrong. If one or the other side does not accept what we are doing they can choose their own way, refer to their own leaders, and ask what their general view on the situation is. I am here for a short time only. I represent the EU Presidency. I have informed the west European Presidency that the EU and the European governments should do whatever they see fit. I am sure they will be pleased to hear the news. I do not wish to obstruct the future of Mostar. I am only interested in obtaining funds for Mostar. But if the aspirations of one or the other side are elsewhere, why not? If one or the other mayor wishes to be a hero, why not? In the end we will see which way is the right one and who has really helped the people. My interest lies in the people of Mostar.

[Kajtaz]] Croat authorities have started to build two buildings in the central part of the city. They claim they have full right to build while the Bosniak side claims they do not. Is this perhaps the beginning of a new political crisis in the city?

[Koschnick] No, I do not think so. This is a problem of the belief of who is right and who is wrong. All things done before we took over the central zone present a real problem. We have agreed in principle that we should work together, on both sides of the front line. These are the problems that both sides have. The moment I issued the decree, the legal side changed. They [the Croats] began building before my decree. They had documents showing that they were building on the plot for which their city authorities are responsible. This is all right as long as it does not impinge upon the private property law. [passage omitted] [end recording]

B-H: HDZ Urges Croatian Refugees To Return to Sarajevo

AU1803135196 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with the return of refugees and displaced persons to the city of Sarajevo, the City Committee of the HDZ [Croatian Democratic Community] of Bosnia-Herzegovina in Sarajevo has issued a public statement that points out that the right is given by the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Dayton agreement to all refugees and displaced persons in Bosnia-Herzegovina freely to return to their homes.

Among other things, the Sarajevo HDZ City Committee points out in its statement that through the media it is calling on all refugees and displaced people of Croatian nationality to register and express their desire in writing to return to their homes in Sarajevo. So far, about 1,500

Croatian families have registered their wish to return; that is, about 6,500 Croats who left their homes in Sarajevo during the war.

B-H: Croatian Minority Places Conditions for Return

AU1903131696 Sarajevo VECERNJE NOVINE (European edition) in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 96 p 2

[Commentary by Jasminka Sabic: "Croat Municipality"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Who is again threatening the Croats in Zenica? In the first months of aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina, HVO [Croatian Defense Council] units took over half of Zenica and put up the [Croat] checkered flags. It was commonly known that the western part of the town, with the industrial zone, faculties, part of the railway station, and part of the building fund (just enough to accommodate the 15.6 percent of Zenica Croats) belonged to Croats, that is, the HDZ [Croatian Democratic Community]. At that time it was not important that Zenica was inhabited by 22,651 Croats, 80,377 Muslims, and 22,592 Serbs, nor that the latter two groups could, under no condition, be packed into the part of the town not covered with checkered flags. The HVO's weapons were stronger than both the Serb aggression and the Muslim idea not to divide the town. By spring 1993, the Muslim idea of an undivided Zenica as well as the armed forces grew stronger, and the checkered flags that divided the town were removed. The Zenica Bosniaks are even today trying to prove to those Croats, who did not leave the town at the HDZ's summons, that the town is too small to be divided, that cohabitation is the only possibility, and that no house can be too small if the inhabitants get along with each other.

However, they were not able to convince them. The entire HDZ from the area of the Lastva Valley met in Vitez over the last few days, and said, loud and clear, that the following has to be done in order for the returning Croats not to feel threatened: the HVO units that were banished from Zenica in 1993 have to be restored, an HRT [Hrvatska Radio Televizija—Croatian Radio and Television] signal in Zenica has to be installed, introduce the equality of the Croat language in Zenica schools, all foreigners from the area of central Bosnia-Herzegovina must be driven out, and a Croat municipality in Zenica has to be formed. These demands greatly resemble the demands publicly made by the HDZ when the Croatian flags and HVO forces divided Zenica at the beginning of the war. The only difference are the reasons for which the demands were made....

At the beginning of Serb aggression in Bosnia-Herzegovina, HDZ hid its attempts to obtain a greater part of the Bosnian spoils behind the alleged [proponto] threat of the Bosniak majority toward the Croat minority. The Muslims were then strong in number, but weak in arms, and thus forced to leave their homes. Since the balance of power has changed, the Croat longing for protection against intimidation is a justified consequence of their fear of their memories of 1993. Who has ever seen that cohabitation can be forced upon a people? After all, that is the way in which the Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina are being threatened.

B-H: Croatian Defense Council Promotions Announced

LD1603100496 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1600 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a session in Mostar, the Presidential Council of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia has promoted nine members of the Croatian Defense Council. Also in Mostar, a news conference was held at the EU headquarters today. HINA correspondent Pejo Gasparevic reports:

[Gasparevic] As announced after the session of the Presidential Council of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, Major General Zivko Budimir was promoted to the rank of colonel general. The following brigadiers were promoted to the rank of major general: Pero Cavar, Dragan Turcic, Drago Dragicevic, Zeljko Glasnovic, Ivan Kolak, Djuro Matuzovic, Stanko Sopta, and Zeljko Siljek.

At the same session, Ivan Bender, acting president of the Presidential Council of the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, submitted a report on the gradual transfer of civilian authority from the Croat Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia to the bodies of the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation. Apart from this report, concrete measures were adopted for the realization of established political stands. The council also adopted a report on the security situation. [passage omitted]

B-H: Police Chief Denies Accord on Deployment, Uniforms

AU1703212696 Hanau NOVA BOSNA in Serbo-Croatian 16 Mar 96 p 3

[Article by O.D.: "No Agreement Reached on Croatian Police Officers Deploying in Ilidza"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 15 Mar—No agreement was reached on the deployment of nine Croatian police officers in blue uniforms in Ilidza, Enes Bezdrob, head of the Sarajevo security service, said at a recent meeting held in the Office of the High Representative of the International Community for the Implementation of the Civilian Part of the B-H Peace Agreement Carl Bildt. According to the statement released by Bildt's office, the meeting was attended by the highest representatives of the federal police, federal Interior Minister Avdo Hebib, with deputy Jozo Leutar, Sarajevo and Kiseljak police chiefs Enes Bezdrob and Mladen Tolo, and representatives of the international forces.

"Michael Steiner has deceived the public and has released a statement saying that the Bosniak and Croatian representatives have agreed on the deployment of police officers in Ilidza. This is not accurate, and I had requested that we announce at the press conference, scheduled for Wednesday [13 March] at 1700, that no mutual agreement had been reached on the deployment of Croatian police officers in blue uniforms. That is why I asked Steiner at the press conference when the agreement had been reached," police chief Bezdrob said. Bezdrob stressed that the representatives of the Bosniak side had never agreed to have Croatian police officers carry out their duties in blue uniforms and that he was unaware that any of the Bosniak police officials had accepted such an agreement. He stressed that the issue of organizing the police was being intentionally politicized and that he and his associates reject such intentions. "We are going to carry out our duties in a professional manner; we have no interest in politics," Enes Bezdrob said.

B-H: Federal Police Enter Sarajevo Suburb of Grbavica

AU1903094996 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 0900 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning, the federal police entered the Sarajevo district of Grbavica, the last of the five Sarajevo districts to be reintegrated in the unified city. The federal police immediately started to patrol the streets of this district.

It is estimated that 1,000-2,000 mainly elderly people, including a small number of Croats and Bosniaks who have managed to survive under the Serb authorities during the war, have remained in this district despite threats and fires.

As part of the realization of the TOA [Transfer of Authority] plus 90 deadlines of the Dayton agreement, the Foca local communities of Jabuka and Ustikolina, and Praca in the Pale municipality will also be reintegrated in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina today. The federal police and the representatives of the organs of authority will enter Praca.

B-H: Interior Minister: No Problems, Incidents in Grbavica

AU1903121296 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1100 GMT 19 Mar 96

[Statement by Bosnia-Herzegovina Interior Minister Avdo Hebib in the Sarajevo district of Grbavica on 19 March—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Grbavica has been almost completely devastated. Dear listeners, we can see that all the buildings around us have been torched and destroyed, but what can one do? Unfortunately, we have had to suffer this, too. If God allows, and I have said this several times, we will make an even better and nicer Grbavica.

As for the police, they have already been deployed for several hours. They have covered all the areas. You can see for yourself that there is real order in Grbavica. Just around us here there is a fairly large group of people. Let them be, thank God for that. We will maintain the order of people entering Grbavica according the rate that we had planned. So far we have had neither problems nor incidents.

However, I warn all the citizens to exercise the utmost caution when they move around, as this used to be a zone of constant combat operations. Many mines and explosives have been laid. I have already been informed that there have been one or two (?mine) explosions. Therefore, I appeal to citizens and warn them for their own safety to take care where they are going. They should not enter any buildings until they have been marked safe, they have been checked and marked that they can be entered. Our mine-clearing teams are working non-stop. Thank God we have [word indistinct] people, who are very, very well trained.

We have been so successful with reintegration so far that we have not had a single member wounded. [passage omitted]

B-H: Serb Official Warns of Islamization of Sarajevo

LD1903144396 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 1253 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sarajevo, 19 Mar (SRNA)—Momcilo Krajisnik, speaker of the People's Assembly of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic, warned the international community today of the real danger of Sarajevo becoming the European base for Islamic extremism and expansionism following the exodus of Sarajevo Serbs.

"I am not saying that it will become another Tehran but it is certain that the Islamic factor will do everything it can to prevail here. In any case, the exodus of Sarajevo Serbs will have far-reaching and dangerous consequences for all of Europe," Krajisnik told SRNA and REUTER.

He said that the Serb people fought on two fronts for their legitimate rights in Sarajevo—"against the enemy, and also against the international community's lack of understanding." Krajisnik added that Dayton sealed the fate of the Sarajevo Serbs.

"Sarajevo became neither like Mostar nor like the city envisioned in Dayton, simply because international players stubbornly insisted on a concept which completely ignored the legitimate rights of the Sarajevo Serbs and their will expressed in a referendum," Krajisnik said.

According to him, "the leadership of the Serb Republic did everything to secure concrete protection guarantees for the [Sarajevo] Serbs so that they could stay in Serb Sarajevo and crown all their victories during the defense of the city. However, the international community was indifferent and the people decided to leave."

"The people sensed that they had to leave, after seeing that the leading international players were completely passive over calls for security guarantees while at the same time the [Muslim-Croat] federal authorities activated all the mechanisms to provoke the exodus [of Sarajevo Serbs]," Krajisnik said.

He said in conclusion that "the international community lost its battle for a multiethnic Bosnia in Sarajevo because the city was the last link between the Serb Republic Serbs and the federation and it was at least a factor of cohesion for some kind of a Bosnia-Herzegovina as our common country."

"I am proud of the people who fought for their undeniable rights and went through a horrific ordeal in order to live in their own state. A difficult period of providing accommodation and securing a life worthy of the magnificent sacrifice of Sarajevo Serbs begins now," Krajisnik said.

B-H: Croatia Said Using Ploce as 'Political Gambit'

AU1803154496 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 18 Mar 96

[Report by Nada al Issa in Zagreb]

[FBIS Translated Text] Attempts will be made again in Geneva today to breathe life into the federation. There are serious problems and tensions now, Tudjman believes. The failure of Russia to attend the talks, he explains, is just bickering between great powers.

However, on the eve of Geneva, the attention in Zagreb was turned to Ploce. Official Zagreb, at least according to Minister Granic and Prime Minister Matesa, would like to lease the port to Bosnia-Herzegovina—that is, to the federation. However, the local Croats are allegedly against the lease since that would jeopardize the sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia.

It is hard to say whether this is yet another Croatian political gambit concerning Bosnia, such as suggesting that, well, you see, we in Zagreb are in favor, but those people in Ploce are naughty and they do not want to. Still, it was Ploce that Minister Granic visited before his trip to Geneva to try and explain that Croatian sovereignty will not be jeopardized, that the lease of the port is in both the political and economic interest of Croatia, that it will be an ordinary transit free zone, and that the Republic of Croatia—that is, the local authorities—will have the exclusive right to grant permission to stay in it.

However, Granic said something else, too: That this way the federation would become more closely tied to the Republic of Croatia and would thus become Europeanized. So the Republic of Croatia still thinks that it is Croatia and the Croats that are leading Bosnia into Europe. But, Mostar, Capljina, and Stolac are also roads to Europe. What is not is drawing some new separation lines in Mostar on the eve of Geneva. We know very well who drew them.

B-H: Krajisnik on Coordinating Bosnian, Serb Constitutions

LD1503212696 Pale Srpska Televizija in Serbo-Croatian 1930 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's meeting in Pale, the Constitutional Committee made a proposal to coordinate the Constitution of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic with the Constitution of the Muslim-Croat Federation. The constitution proposal will be submitted to the assembly. Momcilo Krajisnik, the president of the Constitutional Committee of the People's Assembly of the Serb Republic, comments on today's meeting:

[Begin Krajisnik recording] In line with the Dayton agreement we have pledged to coordinate our Constitution with the Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitution. This is the Constitutional Committee's second session. The committee outlined the proposal covering all the existing differences between our Constitution and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Constitution. We will submit this proposal at the next session of the People's Assembly in order to meet the obligation we have undertaken.

I believe the corrections were fair. They have not seriously jeopardized the integrity of the Serb Republic.

We have accepted the reality that a link must be made, that the Serb Republic and the Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation...[pauses] That Bosnia-Herzegovina has been constituted as an internationally recognized subject. [end recording]

B-H: Federal, Local Serb Representatives on Sarajevo

LD1703205896 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A joint civilian commission on Sarajevo held a session yesterday under the chairmanship of Michael Steiner and with representatives from the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sarajevo, and local Serbs. This commission discussed current progress in the reintegration of Sarajevo and made decisions on the future directions of its activities after 19 March when transfer of civilian authority will be completed.

Participants are in agreement—in accordance with the Rome declaration dated 18 February and with a report by the joint civilian commission dated 14 February this year—that the commission on Sarajevo should continue to operate as an advisory and coordination body for all issues in connection with the implementation of the peace agreement in Sarajevo.

The commission is in agreement that the undivided and integrated city of Sarajevo should provide full security and equal political and human rights for all citizens, that displaced persons should return in both directions in an organized, gradual and voluntary way, and that those Serbs who have left Sarajevo may return and continue to live in their homes.

To this end the commission has decided that the federal authorities in cooperation with IFOR [Implementation Force] and the international police force should speed up their activities in providing security for all citizens in all areas that have been reintegrated in the federation. Those who left the areas that have been reintegrated in the federation may return to their homes, with their private property being completely respected and protected. Socially owned flats will be available to those who have the right to live in them and who return to them within six months. Necessary changes in the current laws will be immediately carried out. [passage omitted]

Serbs will enjoy all political, human and other rights guaranteed by the Rome declaration. Serbs who wish to remain in Sarajevo have the right to continue their professional work, including such professions as medicine, education and municipal administration. Those Serbs who remain in the federation have the right to social security benefits. Serbs have the right to participate in the organization and administration of the city of Sarajevo.

B-H: Ilidza Serbs Say Situation 'Significantly Improved'

AU1803202596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A news conference was held in Ilidza today by the representatives of the Executive Committee of the Serb Democratic Initiative [SDI] of Sarajevo from Ilidza, with the participation of Nebojsa Tusic, Nikola Vojnovic, Goran Kapor, and Dusan Sehovac.

The representatives of the SDI presented correspondents with the fact that in 1990, they were delegated to the executive committee of the Ilidza municipality assembly and that they represented the Serbs in Sarajevo. Dusan Sehovac added that they were representing the interests of the Serbs that had left, as well as those that had remained behind.

They stressed that the situation had been difficult since Ilidza's reintegration into the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina as many cases of looting and threats were registered. The representatives of the SDI stressed that none of the people that maltreated the Serb population in Ilidza were from Ilidza themselves. On the other hand, their former neighbors and colleagues, who had returned to their homes after four years, helped them and greeted them warmly after such a long time. In that connection, they stressed that the situation in Ilidza had significantly improved. They expressed their gratitude to the federation police, which—the SDI representatives claim—did a very good job considering their number. They stressed that a greater number of policemen was needed for the territory of Ilidza.

The representatives of the SDI lay particular emphasis on yesterday's letter from President Alija Izetbegovic of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina Presidency to Bosnia-Herzegovina Federation Interior Minister Avdo Hebib, which—as they all stressed—gave everybody back their self-confidence and the hope that things would get better. They stressed that the citizens of Serb nationality had started returning to the reintegrated areas of Sarajevo. To judge from the contacts with citizens on the territory of the Serb entity, there are many people who want to come back, and some of them have already been to visit their relatives and friends. These people are currently waiting to see how things develop so that they can return home.

As for Grbavica, they expressed the hope that the entry by the federation police would be gradual so as to avoid problems of the kind that happened in Ilidza. The SDI representatives appealed to the Implementation Force and the international police force to protect the remaining citizens and their property in Grbavica.

B-H: Sarajevo: Serb Exodus Finally Over

LD1803221696 Belgrade SRNA in Serbo-Croatian 2113 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sarajevo, 18 Mar (SRNA)—The evacuation of the people and their property from Serb Sarajevo was successfully completed today as the remaining Serb families from the municipalities of Stari Grad and Novo Sarajevo crossed to the territory of the [Bosnian] Serb Republic.

According to the [Serb] Operational Headquarters for the Reception and Settlement of Sarajevo Serbs, less than one percent of Serbs will stay in Serb parts of the city that will be handed over to the Muslim authorities tomorrow.

About 200 Serbs have chosen to stay in their homes in the municipality of Novo Sarajevo. Not a single Serb remains in the municipality of Stari Grad. [passage omitted]

B-H: Minister on Time, Conditions for Refugees' Return

AU1803161396 Hamburg DER SPIEGEL in German 18 Mar 96 p 174

[Interview with Nudzeim Recica, Bosnian minister for refugees and emigrees, by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given: "'Bad Blood'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [DER SPIEGEL] Germany wants to get rid of the 320,000 Bosnian refugees who escaped to Germany as quickly as possible. Most of them are to be deported in summer 1997. Are you prepared for the return of these masses?

[Recica] The deadlines that have been laid down for the repatriation are completely unrealistic. One has to look at the real situation here. The German interior ministers made their decision at the conference table, without even talking to us.

[DER SPIEGEL] What would be a realistic deadline?

[Recica] The process must be extended to at least three or four years. The conditions are also of great importance.

[DER SPIEGEL] What do you have in mind?

[Recica] If the repatriation costs were covered, this would at least be a minimum financial support to start with, which would allow people to survive for three to six months. I am thinking of 150 German marks [DM] per person, which is the minimum subsistence level. What would also be necessary are some basic household items: a blanket, a pillow, a table, and a bed per person. These people are returning to houses where they will not find anything—not even water taps. Also, the houses must be repaired, and we need financial aid for reconstructing small and medium-sized companies, that means specific help to people establishing firms.

[DER SPIEGEL] The refugees have cost the Germans over DM14 billion over the past four years. And now you want them to pay up again?

[Recica] This should by no means look like a deal, although I realize that there are countries that charge a lot of money for taking back their immigrants. We also know that taking on our people has cost a lot of money, and we are grateful for the humanitarian and political help.

[DER SPIEGEL] Yet the Germans should now pay for the reintegration of the refugees?

[Recica] We continue to depend on financial support by those countries that have accepted our people. Instead of paying for the refugees' stay in Germany much longer, the Germans should invest in reconstruction here. The sooner Bosnia has some prospects again, the sooner people will want to return.

[DER SPIEGEL] In Bosnia, you can hear many people say that these "dodgers" and "wealthy refugees" in Germany had rather not come back.

[Recica] Maybe there will be some problems at first. And there will certainly be bad blood when people here see somebody return home from Germany with a Mercedes and DM10,000 in his pocket. But I do not know of any case where a returning refugee was killed or physically abused. The people will certainly drink coffee together after two or three days.

[DER SPIEGEL] Some 800,000 people have fled to Western countries. How many people will return? What is your estimate?

[Recica] We are not a big country, and we want all our people back. After all, a country without citizens is not a state. But history has shown that in comparable situations a maximum of 60 percent returned.

B-H: Commission Examines Human Rights Situation in Vogosca

AU1503205596 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Commission for the Protection of Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina today visited the municipalities of Vogosca and Ilijas where, in talks with the heads of the two municipalities, it acquainted itself with the respect and protection of human rights in these areas.

It has been concluded that all the institutions and services there have resumed following the arrival of the legal authorities of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and that the local communities and the civil protection committees have reactivated their operations. Intensive work is being done on the registration of living accommodations and the provision of the necessary building materials in order to facilitate the speedy return of citizens to these areas.

The basic human rights, the right to movement and accommodation, are guaranteed to all the residents of these municipalities and there have been no cases of Serbs leaving these municipalities following the resumption of power by the legal organs of authority. On the contrary, one person of Serb nationality has returned to the Vogosca municipality. He had left Vogosca after destroying his house and selling off its contents. He had found accommodation with a family in Bratunac, but the conditions were unsatisfactory there and he returned to his house in Semizovac two days ago. He is now trying to repair the house so that he can continue to live in it with his family.

Regarding the power and water supply to the two municipalities, the situation is satisfactory. The commission has said that these municipalities are investing maximum efforts to improve conditions for normal living.

The Presidency's Commission for the Protection of Human Rights will visit the municipalities of Hadzici and Ilidza in the next few days to acquaint itself with the human rights situation in these two municipalities.

Croatia: Tudjman Pleased With Talks in Geneva

LD1803201696 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Following intensive talks on concrete issues which Croatian President Franjo Tudjman had with Warren Christopher, U.S. secretary of state, and then with representatives of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina Ejup Ganic, Kresimir Zubak, Hasan Muratovic, and Jadranko Prlic in the U.S. Mission in Geneva, our president had talks with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. Vera Tomasek has the following report:

[Begin recording] [Tudjman] I think that we have had very successful talks primarily, to put it in that way, at a meeting during a working luncheon, with Christopher, Kornblum, Bildt, Admiral Smith, and representatives of all three sides from Bosnia-Herzegovina, when essential problems burdening the implementation of the Dayton Agreement were presented. It was said that good results had been achieved in the military sphere, weaker results in the civilian sphere, and the weakest results in the political field, which is burdened with a series of problems.

In addition to the plenary talks at the table, when all the participants presented their views, all voicing their support for the resolution of the problems, even more important talks were those that we had with the U.S. delegation led by Secretary of State Christopher, then with a delegation from Bosnia and the Muslim-Croat Federation, and finally with a Serbian delegation led by Milosevic.

In all these talks, let me tell you in chronological order, first with the U.S. delegation... [changes thought] The U.S. and Croatian sides were again in full agreement on important issues regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina and regarding Croatia's attitude toward the processes of integration in Europe.

Then, in talks with the delegation from Bosnia-Herzegovina—Ganic, Zubak, Muratovic, Kapetanovic, and Prlic—we insisted on the need for both Muslim and Croat representatives to embark upon the practical resolution of open issues, to overcome mutual mistrust, through the resolution of the government, through the resolution of the cantonal setup, through the resolution of the problem of customs, taxes and so on. Through this both sides should prove they are in favor of the federation and likewise in favor of deepening relations between the federation and Croatia.

In this context we agreed on a timeframe for completing the cantonal setup; we also agreed that tax problems should be resolved by the end of the month and that, by the beginning of next month, a joint council for cooperation between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina should hold a meeting. By this time the Bosnian side should have appointed members to the joint council.

All in all, I think that bilateral talks with all three sides have been successful. In talks with the Serbian side both parties displayed the desire to speed up the process of full normalization of relations, which was begun with agreements signed by our Minister Granic and Minister Milutinovic. In this respect our bilateral statements, and also further talks which are to take place in Moscow in a few days' time, serve as proof of the improvement and normalization of Croatian-Serbian relations. What is also particularly important is the resolution of current issues in the revitalization of the federation.

We all heard Admiral Smith's report in which he described problems in the military sphere and I think that in this respect we heard from the Croatian side some topical issues for which we will take steps to remove obstacles. All in all, globally speaking, I think that this day in Geneva has been useful and we have reached agreements on all issues that will improve not only the resolution but also remove doubts that have surfaced in the meantime.

[Tomasek] Mr President, does the Serbian delegation still insist on Prevlaka being an open issue?

[Tudjman] The Serbian side has persisted in it, recalling that it had been discussed. However, we reiterated our view that we discussed it in the period when the European Conference on the Resolution of the Crisis in Bosnia-Herzegovina had put forward a proposal on the union of three republics and that there was a proposal then that the Serb Republic should cede territory in the Dubrovnik hinterland in exchange for an access to the sea. However, this issue, with solutions that have been reached for the creation of the federation and the Dayton Agreement, somehow lost its topicality.

On our part, we expressed a readiness to make our contribution to making normalization with Serbia and Yugoslavia, Serbia and Montenegro as effective as possible, and in this respect we expressed our readiness for the Prevlaka area to be demilitarized and that we can guarantee a free sea passage.

What remains is that in further talks which Minister Granic will have with their minister in Moscow that they find a formulation which will be equally satisfactory for both sides in this respect. As for the Croatian side, the fact that this is territory under Croatian sovereign authority and that it is within the internationally recognized borders of Croatia cannot be disputed. [end recording]

Croatia: Tudjman Discusses Recognition of FRY in Geneva

LD1803161996 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Franjo Tudjman, president of the Republic of Croatia, in Geneva together with other Dayton Agreement signatories including the meeting's initiator, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, has had talks about further efforts in implementing the November 1995 peace agreement. Vera Tomasek reports from Geneva:

[Tomasek] Immediately on his arrival in Geneva President Tudjman received John Kornblum, U.S. under secretary for Europe and Canada. According to diplomatic sources, the president told Kornblum about Croatia's interests. Like the talks with Kornblum, this afternoon's talks will focus on political harmonization of the grounds for mutual recognition between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the normalization of relations.

President Tudjman repeated that Croatia is ready for mutual recognition under the condition that the Serb side stops insisting on the problem of Prevlaka.

Among other things, the talks also touched on the next stage in implementing the Dayton peace agreement, that is, preparations for and elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Freedom of movement and of the media and the exchange of prisoners must be secured. Reference was also made to the situation in Sarajevo suburbs, in Bugojno, and Mostar, and cooperation with The Hague tribunal.

It was learned from sources close to our diplomats that a joint statement will be issued at the end of the Geneva summit. During his visit to Geneva, President Dr. Franjo Tudjman presented Neven Madej with a Letter of Credence appointing him permanent representative of the Republic of Croatia in the permanent mission of the Republic of Croatia in the UN office in Geneva.

Croatia: FRY Army Withdrawing Units From E. Slavonia

LD1803210496 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] According to the UNTAES [UN Transitional Administration in eastern Slavonia] reports, Yugoslav Army units are withdrawing from the Croatian part of the river Danube basin. They are going to Serbia for good. This helps to speed up the process of the peaceful reintegration of the Croatian part of the river Danube basin.

The reintegration is going well. The Croatian Serb paramilitary is falling apart, heavy weaponry is being taken to Serbia. According to UNTAES reports, units of the Yugoslav Army are going to Serbia for good.

The 12th Corps is in the process of complete withdrawal to barracks where the weapons are being put in cold storage. Units of the 16th Motorized Brigade are already in Ruma [Serbian town near eastern Slavonia]. Units and equipment of the Yugoslav Army's 36th Armored Brigade have withdrawn to Subotica. Units of the 18th Motorized Brigade have returned to barracks in Novi Sad and Stara Pazova. The 24th Motorized Brigade is preparing for withdrawal. [passage omitted]

Croatia: Derycke, Zagreb Officials Debate UNTAES Role

BR1503122796 Brussels LA LIBRE BELGIQUE in French 14 Mar 96 p 6

[Article by Michel Rosten: "The Pinnacle of Belgian Diplomacy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There can be no denying the evidence that Erik Derycke's visit to Zagreb marks a resounding success in the history of Belgian national diplomacy. Or that it would be unfair to minimize its significance when Belgium's role in east Slavonia is much appreciated by the parties present in the field. The strict neutrality of our compatriots earned them the respect which not all the forces which donned blue helmets in the former Yugoslavia were always able to command.

On Tuesday evening [12 March] this distinction allowed Erik Derycke to speak to President Tudjman in the very clearest terms. He made him understand that when the time comes for Croatia to enter into negotiations with the European Union, Belgium will be necessarily consulted. It is therefore very much in Zagreb's interest not to depart from its present line of conduct on the subject of east Slavonia. "After he confirmed to me that he had halted his military operations for political reasons, I told President Tudjman that he had chosen the right way to win the confidence of Europe," the Belgian foreign minister explained to us, forgetting or feigning to forget, that last summer President Tudjman had criticized his secret services for wrongly informing him of the degree of resistance which the Croatian Army would encounter in Krajina and thus dissuading him from launching an offensive against Vukovar.

Aspirations and Realism

The fact is that the Croatian authorities delivered what was expected of them in the discussions with the Belgians. They placed particular emphasis on what their goodwill could bring. They are seeking to normalize relations with Belgrade, they want the Croatian-Muslim Federation to be strengthened as much as possible, and they would rather have a good tourist season than return to war. Minister Derycke took note of the encouraging inclinations expressed by his interlocutors who, he affirmed, seemed to be aware "of the danger of an undesirable Islamism at the heart of Europe."

Only Deputy Prime Minister Ivica Kostovic proved more severe. While Tudjman was careful to point out that Croatia is a part of the Western world and civilization, Kostovic took the trouble to make it clear that Croatian refugees would not be invited to return to Vukovar until the city is administered by the Croatian authorities. Which is enough to emphasize that attitudes are not prepared for a difficult cohabitation in east Slavonia, no more than they were in the Serbian districts of Sarajevo which returned to the control of the Croatian-Muslim Federation....

Reaping Rewards

However, any slight differences expressed regarding the crisis in Slavonia, which is apparently contained, should not compromise the success of the operation decided by Brussels in cooperation with General Klein. The action plans are precise despite the vague nature of the Erdut accords. All due credit must go to Belgian diplomacy which has taken all the useful measures to ensure that the mission of General Schoups, who will be taking up his command on Thursday in Kisa, in the presence of [Defense Minister] Poncelet, is protected from any unexpected difficulty. Without a seat on the Security Council, the Belgians have nevertheless obtained the mandate they were seeking: At NATO, they forced the hand of the Pentagon and the SACEUR in order to obtain a guarantee of unconditional support by the allies in the event of any setbacks.

These diplomatic successes, which can only be to the country's advantage, suggest a successful outcome for the UNTAES [United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia] mission. But Brussels must not harbor any illusions. If the efforts by Derycke's administration are to have a practical effect in the field, certain political agreements must be reached as soon as possible, and preferably before the end of the month, in order to establish the best possible allocation of competences and responsibilities. The experts would like to give General Schoups as many winning cards as possible, yet at this level, certain measures remain to be taken.

Croatia: Derycke on Ankara Meeting, Future of Slavonia

BR1503150896 Brussels LA LIBRE BELGIQUE in French 15 Mar 96 p 5

[Interview with Belgian Foreign Minister Erik Derycke by Michel Rosten; place and date not given: "The Controversy Over Rearming Bosnia"]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of his visit to Croatia, where he met with President Tudjman, Belgian Foreign Minister Erik Derycke granted an interview to LA LIBRE BELGIQUE. Here is the text of the conversation:

[Rosten] The Ankara conference will make it possible to learn the details of the American contribution to equipping and training the Croat-Muslim military force. Does not European opposition to this plan risk once again creating a transatlantic rift?

[Derycke] Europe has never concealed its concern over the American initiative. The political thinking behind it dates back to the start of the war. Congress has always insisted that the Bosnian troops should be rearmed to enable them to defend themselves more effectively against the Serbs. For a long time the UN embargo worked against such a project which the Europeans saw as having the disadvantage of being uncontrollable. Nevertheless, it did not prevent the warring parties from rearming....

At the Dayton conference the Americans returned to their former idea. Europe tried to counter this strategy by organizing, following the Paris conference (where the Dayton agreements were signed, ed.), conferences on disarmament in Bonn and Vienna. These met with success because all the parties to the conflict participated and cooperated.

Can we therefore speak of transatlantic differences? Yes and no. The Ankara conference should help clarify the situation. In Palermo the Europeans decided to send an observer. Croatia too. The fact is that it is important to maintain a military balance. But we may suppose that rumors which give reason to fear that things could slide out of control, due to Iran's increasing influence in Bosnia, will cause the Americans to think again.

[Rosten] Is there not a contradiction between the Dayton agreements which permit the rearming of the Bosnian fighters and the UNTAES [United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia] mission which is to demilitarize Eastern Slavonia?

[Derycke] At first sight no. We can try to obtain a military balance in Bosnia-Herzegovina and consider that this is a good thing while at the same time trying to demilitarize Eastern Slavonia. From a military point of view I see no contradiction between these two procedures. The disagreements which we must fear would relate more to a failure to disarm Slavonia and a continuing imbalance of forces in Bosnia.

[Rosten] The contacts you have just had in Zagreb gave you the feeling that the desire of the Croatian authorities to join the European Union has persuaded them to opt for moderation in Slavonia. But do you not find it premature to expect that this process of a normalization of relations between Croatia and Slavonia would be able to lead to a settlement of this territorial dispute?

[Derycke] The Croats confirmed to me that they did not want a military solution to the Slavonia problem. They did so in order to score points in the eyes of the European Union and in order not to complicate matters regarding possible future membership. They are pursuing this direction and moving quicker than the Serbs as witnessed by the fact that they are trying to find a solution to the problem of war criminals. They are ahead of the Bosnian Serbs on this matter....

As to a bilateral arrangement? It seems premature for the moment. But there is no reason not to envisage such a possibility, especially if things were to take a turn for the worse in Bosnia, although here too Zagreb and Belgrade should provide a guarantee for progress on problem issues.

[Rosten] If the Croat-Muslim Federation achieved political stabilization, do you think Zagreb could be tempted by a confederation with it despite the Muslim component?

[Derycke] I have the feeling that the Croats believe in the potential of the Croat-Muslim Federation. They showed this, first of all, by lending military assistance at the end of last summer. Today they want to proceed to a second stage which should lead to economic cooperation. The aim? To convince the Bosnians to cooperate in economic integration. But when commenting on this objective in Zagreb, my interlocutors stressed that while they wanted to work with an Islamic partner, it would have to be of a European nature....

[Rosten] Before it proves a military success, the implementation of UNTAES is already a diplomatic success for Belgium. Has Belgium's international credibility been strengthened as a result?

[Derycke] Belgium was not looking for diplomatic success in pursuing this course. In general, the government's decision is designed to continue what was begun and to express its solidarity with other contributing countries. Some people may believe we already have enough concerns without bothering about Slavonia. But this region is too close to home to ignore and we must therefore assume our responsibilities. We must hope that we will do a good job. It will only be at the end of the mission that we can judge its success. Finally, I would add that Belgium has never pursued such a course for internal political reasons and that this mission allowed us to establish closer links with several partners we approached—the Austrians, the Greeks, and the Luxembourgers.

Croatia: Turkish Air Force Delegation on Cooperation

LD1803194996 Zagreb Radio Croatia Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Turkish Air Force delegation, headed by General Ahmet Corekci, the commander of the Turkish Air Force, is on a two-day visit to the Republic of Croatia. General Corekci has had a meeting with Colonel General Imra Agotic, the commander of the Croatian Air Force, and was received by Corps General Zvonimir Cervenko, the chief of General Staff [CGS] of the Croatian Army. Anabela Lajtauf reporting:

[Lajtauf] Following the meeting, General Cervenko said that the talks covered current and future military cooperation between Turkey and Croatia. The CGS of the Croatian Army said that agreements on military and technical cooperation and the training of Croatian officers in Turkey will be signed upon the return to Zagreb of Defense Minister Gojko Susak. General Cervenko went on to say:

[Begin Cervenko recording] The Turkish Army is one of the most modern in Europe [as heard], especially its Air Force. We can learn a great deal from them. We have met with understanding and, I hope, with support for our cooperation in the future. [end recording]

[Lajtauf] Speaking abut the meeting, Turkish General Corekci said that he was glad to be in Croatia, a country with which Turkey had always enjoyed good relations. He went on to say:

[Begin Corekci recording, in English with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation] We talked with the generals about our future and, as you know, we will soon sign agreements on technical and military cooperation and cooperation in training officer cadre. [end recording]

[Lajtauf] In conclusion, General Ahmet Corekci thanked Generals Cervenko and Agotic on the invitation to visit Croatia and announced even better relations between the two countries in the future.

Croatia: Daily on Talks With Serbs, Mutual Recognition

AU1803140596 Zagreb VJESNIK in Serbo-Croatian 13 Mar 96 p 5

[Commentary by Ivkica Bacic: "No Mention of Recognition"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The talks on Monday with the Serbian delegation covered everything except Serbia's recognition of Croatia's territorial integrity. This topic has been removed from the agenda until further notice. Announcing that he will again be visiting Belgrade in April, Foreign Minister Mate Granic already put some "still open matters" aside. The diplomatic recognition between the states is not on the list.

Ever since Croatia and the "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" have been moving closer to one another and normalizing their relations in a post-Dayton manner, this is the first time that the countries' foreign ministers have ever signed anything. The day-long talks, held between the two delegations in Zagreb on Monday, could hardly be called a change from the usual diplomatic work atmosphere. Usual diplomatic work, that is, since the only thing that one can definitely say about the two countries is that they at least do not see each other literally at gunpoint. Everything else between Zagreb and Belgrade is, undiplomatically termed, in a state of fog, or, in other words, something in between!

Transportation Agreement Package

To be more precise—two countries do not recognize each other, but their leading politicians (even those at the top) often meet and talk to one another cordially. Serbia, with its military force, technology, and personnel, still occupies a part of Croat territory, yet swears at every meeting, including the one in Zagreb, that it has no territorial pretensions. In Zagreb the diplomatic heads signed minutes (supposed to be something between a protocol and an agreement); documents that are, reporters are told, of a "temporary nature" (apparently because the two countries do not recognize one another). These papers normalize the Croat-Serb transport, economic and consular relations to such an extent that even countries without territorial "misunderstandings" would be envious of them. Almost everything regarding the relations between Zagreb and Belgrade can be put into four categories. Documents have either been signed for the first time (the opening of pipelines, highways and railways, as well as air traffic and flight corridors), or are an expansion of what has already been in existence (the Croat Office and Serb Bureau will carry out some consular duties but will not turn into consulates). The rest of the topics are either awaiting endorsement (the agreement on the normalization of relations between the two countries) or are being discussed or negotiated (the disturbing subject of missing or imprisoned persons). However, there is no mention of mutual recognition.

It is not controversial that members of our delegation tried to convince journalists in the hallways that Croatia will receive financial compensation (in foreign currency) for the signed package of transportation agreements. In the beginning, for a year or two (as long as UNTAES [United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia] stays in the Croat Danube region)—the duration has not yet been set—the roads will only be used for "international" transportation, and not for "local" purposes, such as connecting Zagreb and Belgrade. What is controversial, are certain facts, such as the one that Croat policemen and customs officials will, until further notice, not be present on the roads passing through the Croat Danube region.

Creative Solutions

What is controversial is the fact that Croatia has not mentioned Prevlaka [Croat coastal area under Serb occupation], either during press conferences, or in official statements following talks with the Yugoslav delegation. This gave the guests [the Serb delegation] leeway, and they did not hesitate to do with it whatever they pleased. They even planted an official document of their Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the journalists. This document clearly states that the talks also mentioned "controversial issues—Prevlaka and the Serb Republic's access to the [Adriatic] sea!"

The member of the Belgrade delegation that was responsible for information later justified herself by saying that the paper was issued without her knowledge, and that it, supposedly, was not an official document. She added that it would be best if the journalists just "disregarded" the document. One cannot avoid the impression that Belgrade wanted to incite what some called a diplomatic scandal and others called a misunderstanding of protocol in Zagreb.

The "disregarded" document, handed out in the morning, also mentioned the reception held by Croat President Franjo Tudjman. It was therefore possible to read in the morning that the during the talks with the president it was "confirmed and mutually ascertained...." However, Tudjman received his guests only in the evening!

As an extremely hospitable host, official Zagreb easily passed over this incident, probably to confirm what one of our leading officials said before the official talks even began. When asked whether the opening of the highways was possible before mutual recognition, he answered, "Everything is possible with creative solutions. It is necessary to be flexible and to reduce the tension in the Croat-Serb relations. We need a new detente."

It seems, therefore, that the question of mutual recognition or, more precisely, the Serb recognition of Croatia's territorial integrity, has been removed from the agenda. Until further notice! Because Minister Granic, announcing that he will again be going to Belgrade by the end of April, has already put aside some "still open matters" which are planned for discussion. Mutual diplomatic recognition is not on this list.

Everything is possible with "creative solutions," even the solution that Croats begin to drive on the highway which will continue to territorially infringe their country, and territorially expand neighboring Serbia. Ever since we have accepted Serbia's diplomatic and political game of "step by step," we have normalized relations with our neighbors, but we have not come closer to Belgrade recognizing our internationally recognized [ovjeren] borders.

Croatia: Neighborly Relations Seen To Lead to Europe

AU1503113696 Zagreb VECERNJI LIST in Serbo-Croatian 11 Mar 96 p 7

[Interview with Hido Biscevic, assistant to the minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Croatia, by Mate Piskor in Zagreb; date not given: "Western Relations With Our Eastern Neighbors, Too"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Development of neighborly relations by the Republic of Croatia with the countries in its environs and resolution of the problem of minority rights protection have often been emphasized as the conditions upon which Croatia's integration into the European mainstream will largely depend. That was the subject of our interview with Hido Biscevic, assistant to the minister of foreign affairs, immediately upon his return from the visit, in which he accompanied Minister Granic, to the Scandinavian countries of Norway and Sweden.

[Piskor] Deputy Minister, in the bodies of the Council of Europe soon there will be a new round of discussions on Croatia's admission into the Council of Europe. Has the position of Croatia in Europe essentially changed?

[Biscevic] The position of Croatia in Europe, objectively speaking, oscillates partly because of the situation in Croatia, partly because of the assessments of certain aspects of relations or the situation in Croatia by certain European countries. Therefore at this moment, on the eve of the session of the Council of Europe Political Committee, and of the mutual consultations of European countries regarding the international position of Croatia and the image of Croatia in Europe today, it is particularly important to point at the great efforts Croatia has been making to arrange relations with its neighbors.

Croatia at the Boundary of Worlds

[Piskor] Because it will be easier for us to get into Europe through our neighbors?

[Biscevic] Because our policy of neighborly relations is an important constituent element of our relations with Europe. Croatia has two types of relations with the neighbors that surround it. On one side, our neighbors are countries like Italy, Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, and on the other side there are Bosnia-Herzegovina and FRY [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia].. And that shows us clearly what kind of boundaries Croatia finds itself in today. Italy, Austria, Hungary, and even partly Slovenia, are countries situated in the western European environment; they are in the European political, democratic and economic, military and security system, or they are approaching it. Therefore the arrangement of our relations with those countries essentially determines the degree of Europeanization of Croatia and its international position. On the other hand there are Bosnia-Herzegovina and the FRY, which have not yet been "situated" in the European order and they are areas within which all the political and other processes have not yet been completed in a way that would guarantee European standards. In such a situation, if Croatia, with its foreign policy, with its diplomatic activity, succeeds in making the European principles of interstate relations apply also in the relations with those two countries, then Croatia will significantly contribute to the Europeanization of this region, as well as to European relations as a whole.

[Piskor] In developing neighborly relations, who is our most important partner, if we may rate our neighbors in that way without offending any of them?

[Biscevic] There is no doubt that relations with the Republic of Italy are among Croatia's most important foreign political priorities, as are relations with Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, depending on the dynamics. Italy is our largest neighbor, a member of the European Union, NATO, it is our largest foreign trade partner, and it is noticeable that since the takeover of the European Union presidency, Italy has started to show more flexibility and more understanding for Croatia and Croatian stands regarding some common issues.

Slovenian "Package" Opened

[Piskor] Are various kinds of pressures on Croatia from Italy, from the territorial aspirations to the most recent accusations of war crimes committed against the Italians after the Second World War, a reflection of Rome's official policy?

[Biscevic] I am convinced that they are not, although there is no doubt that relations among parties, particularly the aggressive appearance of postfascists, influence the creation of a climate of pressure on Croatia. However, in the last couple of months, as a result of common diplomatic efforts, through the meetings of President Tudjman with President Scalfaro, through the meetings of Minister Agnelli, the efforts of Minister Granic, the work of the joint state committee for political issues, we have reached a stage where we can say that we have mature relations, and we are close to solving a large part of the open questions.

[Piskor] Which of those questions is most important?

[Biscevic] We have reached a point at which we have an agreement on minority protection prepared, which is of crucial significance. The agreement on the protection of minorities, made with Italy, essentially improves and completes the image of Croatia, as it was the minority questions that provoked the criticism or pressure that was most frequently directed toward Croatia from Europe.

[Piskor] Recently, can fresh winds be detected in relations between Croatia and Slovenia?

[Biscevic] The preparations for the upcoming meeting of Ministers Granic and Thaler are exceptionally important for the development of relations between Croatia and Slovenia. It seems that the Slovenian side has started to realize that their former policy of solving all open questions in a package has not yielded results.

[Piskor] Does that mean that the step-by-step policy is more advantageous?

[Biscevic] Croatia has been saying from the very beginning that open questions must be solved wherever a breakthrough can be made, from the Ljubljanska Banka, the nuclear plant, mainland border demarcation, property-rights relations, Piran, local border traffic. And they were putting all of it into one package, tied with a band called Piran Bay. Because of such an approach, but also because of the policy of big expectations which had raised the temperature in the Slovenian general public, there have been blockades and the problems have remained frozen. I am sure that today, also in Ljubljana they recognize that this blockade in relations with neighboring Croatia is one of the elements that brakes their approach to the European Union.

Solution for Minorities

[Piskor] What can we expect at the approaching meeting of the two ministers of foreign affairs?

[Biscevic] First of all, we can expect to show, in an open, European spirit, by a joint statement, which questions we solved, which we did not solve, but to say publicly that we are ready to solve them very soon in a way that will contribute to the rise of mutual relations and both countries' approach to European integration. I can say that we have made significant progress in questions of mainland demarcation, and we are practically at the end of it, there are agreements regarding the Ljubljanska Banka to agree over optimal solutions, both for the debts toward the citizens and for the debts toward the state. We are also on the threshold of solving the nuclear plant issue, we are finishing the negotiations on property-rights relations, local border traffic, social and health care. It is only regarding Piran that there are, in principle, no new elements. However, some progress has evidently been made if the problem of Piran Bay has at least ceased to be publicly presented as the precondition for the solution of all other open questions.

[Piskor] All together, talking about our closest neighbors, we have the smallest number of open questions and problems with our northern neighbor Hungary?

[Biscevic] Correct. There is practically no open question at all, and the Croatian-Hungarian agreement on minority rights is the first such agreement in southeast Europe, precisely where the minority issues have frequently been a cause of instability and crises between countries. That is exceptionally important for Croatia, and I am glad that it is in such an atmosphere that the arrival of Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs Kovacs to Zagreb is being prepared.

Reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje

[Piskor] The visit of Austrian Foreign Minister Schuessel to Zagreb seems to have opened a new, even more positive page in Croatian-Austrian relations?

[Biscevic] The visit of Minister Schuessel took place in an excellent atmosphere. In his talks with Prime Minister Matesa and Minister Granic, he has repeated that Austria had a continued interest in developing relations with Croatia, that it wanted to be active in all questions of interest to Croatia, particularly important in this context, that Austria wanted to mediate for the Croatian interest and Croatian readiness to join European integration processes.

[Piskor] He has also expressed readiness to promote economic relations?

[Biscevic] Of course. During the talks with Prime Minister Matesa and Minister Stern, they were talking about intensifying economic cooperation, and increasing the involvement of Austrian capital. One Austrian bank has already been opened in Zagreb, the other one will also open one branch here, and that will, I am sure, open the way to finalizing negotiations with German and French banks. The president of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce has expressed readiness to develop cooperation with our Chamber, however, what should be of particular interest to our public is the great interest shown for active cooperation in helping, financing, and stimulating the small enterpreneur in Croatia.

[Piskor] From the West we move eastward. Normalization of relations with Serbia has stuck once again, slowing down. Will that have any influence upon the course of peaceful reintegration of eastern Slavonia and Baranja?

[Biscevic] Naturally the process of normalization with Serbia and the peaceful reintegration of Croatian Podunavlje [the Danube river basin] is a two-way street. As far as Belgrade is ready to solve, on European principles, interstate relations with Croatia, so far will the whole territory of Croatian Podunavlje be solved in a more peaceful way. That is, the social and economic picture to be created in that area will be identical to the picture that Europe and Croatia want in that area. We want it to be a peaceful, developed region, in which the Croats and the autochtonous Serb population will live in a new atmosphere.

[Box, p 7]

What Does Milutinovic Bring Along?

[Piskor] Minister Milutinovic is in Zagreb right now, but negotiations started even earlier. What is the subject of the negotiations?

[Biscevic] When the experts from Belgrade arrived, we entered the phase of concrete talks about individual elements of mutual agreement regarding the superhighway, railroad traffic, post and telecommunications, air corridors, consular departments. There are several files within the package of normalization that have been supposed to be agreed over at an expert level in order to be able to make political decisions.

[Piskor] Does that mean that it is possible that the opening of the superhighway will take place before mutual recognition?

[Biscevic] The results of the negotiations will be published if not today then tomorrow. Allow me to say that, at this moment, with creative solutions, everything is possible. To make myself properly understood, allow me to explain. We need to be flexible, and solutions must reflect the interest to finally introduce a policy of decreasing tension in Croatian-Serbian relations, as well as in the whole region. We need a new detente.

[Piskor] And what about the problem of the missing? How can this fit into this creative flexibility?

[Biscevic] That is also a part of the files that have now been discussed at the expert level meetings. Minister Granic raised that question in Belgrade as a priority, and we will insist on it.

[Box, p 7]

Three Bosniak Options

[Piskor] The situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, particularly in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, has constantly been changing, and here I am thinking of relations between Croats and Bosniaks. Where is the key? What is the secret of those processes?

[Biscevic] The crucial interest of Croatia is to define its relations with Serbia and the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in a way that will move it closer to Europe. And therefore the question of solving the problem in Bosnia-Herzegovina is of crucial significance for the new regional order and for Croatia's future position in it. On the Bosniak side, that is, in the political leadership, the Federation has been accepted in a variety of ways. For some of them it is the final solution, which also protects the national interests of the Bosniak side, while for the others it is only a stage, one step toward the creation of an integral Bosnia-Herzegovina in which the so-called civic state would seemingly be a democratic framework for national inequality.

[Piskor] What tendencies can you see now?

[Biscevic] It is not unambiguous. There are at least three political options on the Bosniak side: a concept of Bosnia-Herzegovina as a federal state of two entities, a concept of an Islamic state over a smaller area, and the aforementioned concept of a civic Bosnia-Herzegovina over the whole territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Because of all this, particularly at a time when preparations are being made for elections in Bosnia-Herzegovina, when one can already hear rumors of the need to create "the alliance of democratic forces of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia," it is perhaps necessary to remind many of us to look at Sarajevo with realism but also with patience. There are thus rises and falls in the development of relations although, objectively speaking, the Federation is the best solution for the Croats and Bosniaks in Bosnia-Herzegovina and that is why Croatia continues to invest a lot of effort to make that model succeed. In so doing, it expects the assistance of the international community because objectively it is also in the European interest that Croatia should succeed in arranging its relations with its eastern and southeastern neighbors in the "western way."

Croatia: Unions Delay General Strike, Opt for Talks

AU1903131796 Paris AFP in English 1213 GMT 19 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Zagreb, March 19 (AFP)—Croatian trade unions are to discuss proposals by the government for negotiations, delaying the threat of a general strike called for Wednesday [20 March], union sources said on Tuesday.

"Our general council is to meet on March 25 to discuss new proposals by the government and we will probably choose dialogue instead of a strike," a spokesman for the Union of Independent Croatian Unions (SSSH), Hasim Bahtijari, said.

The Croatian labour ministry, which is responsible for talks with the unions, has said that Prime Minister Zlatko Matesa had responded to an appeal for talks by the SSSH and had left the union to state the place and time of the talks.

The SSSH, which is the biggest union organisation in Croatia, called the strike if the government did not meet its demands by March 15.

The strike would be the biggest such industrial protest since Croatia gained independence in 1991.

Labour Minister Vesna Babic said: "I doubt that the strike will take place. This method is sterile for the unions as it is for the government and for the Croatian economy."

The SSSH is demanding mainly an increase in the minimum wage from 1,045 kunas ($195) to 1,100 kunas ($205) per month, an increase in the tax-free part of pay from 700 kuna to 1,100 kuna and changes in the laws covering pay negotiations.

"The pay demands may be considered but any increase cannot be considered until the second half of the financial year. Also we are ready to discuss a change in the tax base but any change could not be made until the new tax year," Babic said.

The president of the SSSH, Dragutin Lesar, said recently that the unions would not give way to the government which, he said, wanted to talk to gain time.

Croatia: HDZ Right Wing Said Working To Oust Matesa

AU1503163796 Sarajevo Radio Bosnia-Herzegovina Network in Serbo-Croatian 1400 GMT 15 Mar 96

[Report by Nada al-Issa from Zagreb]

[FBIS Translated Text] Croatian Prime Minister Vlatko Matesa and Foreign Minister Mate Granic expressed satisfaction with the results of their visit to Sarajevo yesterday [14 March]. However, the so-called right wing of the ruling HDZ [Croatian Democratic Community] is unhappy that the port of Ploce is also being discussed with the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They demand that this issue be discussed only with the Government of the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nada al-Issa reports from Zagreb:

[Al-Issa] The official statements by Prime Minister Matesa and Minister Granic after their visit to Sarajevo are very optimistic, conciliatory, and profederal. Both Granic and Matesa say that the Federation is a model that simply must be supported. Both the Croatian leadership and the Presidency and the Government of the Bosnia-Herzegovina are in complete unanimity on this.

In order to strengthen relations, the Republic of Croatia will lease the port of Ploce to Bosnia-Herzegovina. This was also discussed in Sarajevo yesterday. However, the port of Ploce remains the stumbling block for the right wing of the HDZ in Croatia. They have already complained to the prime minister and the foreign minister about discussing the port of Ploce with the Government of Bosnia-Herzegovina. They demand that this be discussed only with the Government of the Federation and that the port, if it has to be leased, be leased only to the Federation and not to the state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as this, according to them, would threaten the sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia.

This example illustrates best the truth about the political gossip in Zagreb that major squabbling is currently happening in the ruling HDZ, between the so-called moderate and right-wing factions, about policies toward Bosnia. The former wants both the Federation and good relations, while the latter, which consists mainly of the Herzegovinians, wants neither.

Commenting on this issue, the weekly GLOBUS—citing, as it says, a source very close to the very top of the HDZ—writes that the right-wing faction is already working to oust Prime Minister Matesa himself. They say they would be more than glad to also oust Minister Granic, who has persistently, patiently, and, it appears genuinely been building the Federation. However, they do know that President Tudjman will not easily give in on that issue. Which faction will win, people here in Zagreb say, depends on whose side Tudjman takes, as he himself can allegedly no longer reconcile them.

Croatia: Armed Forces' Appointments, Retirements

LD1403173196 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 13 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On the basis of Article 100, Paragraph One of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and Article 159, Paragraph One, and Article 131 of the Law on Services in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Croatia, and as part of the transition to the peacetime organization of the Armed Forces, Dr. Franjo Tudjman, the president of the republic and the supreme commander of the Armed Forces of Croatia, passed, among others, the following decisions on 12 March:

Admiral Sveto Letica was promoted to the rank of Staff admiral. Major Generals Kresimir Cosic, Pavao Miljavac, and Miljenko Crnac were promoted to the rank of colonel general. Rear Admiral Vid Stipetic was promoted to the rank of vice admiral.

The following generals and admirals have been transferred to new posts:

Colonel General Kresimir Cosic was appointed deputy defense minister of the Republic of Croatia.

Colonel General Kresimir Cosic was born in Zagreb in 1949. He has a doctorate in electronics. In the fatherland war he was one of the prominent commanders of the antitank defenses [protuoklopna odbrana] of the Croatian Army. He has been chairman of the Military-Technical Council of the Ministry of Defense since September 1991. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1994. He has been awarded the Order of Ban Jelacic, the Order of Danica Hrvatska, the Picture of Franjo Bucar, and the Service to Fatherland Certificate. He was also awarded the Flash, Storm, and Exceptional Deeds badges.

Colonel General Pavo Miljavac was appointed deputy chief of the Main Staff of the Croatian Army.

Colonel General Pavo Miljavac was born in Maletici near Duga Resa in 1953. He has a degree from the textile-chemical faculty. He was the commander of the 137th Brigade of the Croatian Army, the chief of staff of the Karlovac zone of operation, commander of the Karlovac Corps District, and currently the Croatian Army's Main Staff deputy commander in charge of the Territorial Army. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1994. He was awarded the following: Order of Prince Domagoj with Chain, Order of Ban Jelacic, the Certificate of Fatherland's Gratitude, and the Service to Fatherland certificate. He was awarded the Flash, Storm, and Exceptional Deeds badges.

Colonel General Ante Gotovina was appointed Chief Inspector of the Croatian Army.

Colonel General Ante Gotovina was born in Zadar in 1955. Following his secondary education he joined the [French] Foreign Legion. As an instructor in the airborne assault forces [zracno desantne snage] he served in Africa and Central and South America. After his return home, he was the head of the 1st Guard Brigade; he was in charge of many operations of the Croatian Army in Slavonia during which he was wounded. He was deputy commander in charge of special units of the Main Staff of the Croatian Army. He also served in the [Bosnian] Croat Defense Council. In October 1992 he was appointed commander of the Split Corps District. He was promoted to the rank of colonel general in 1995. He has been awarded the following: Order of Prince Domagoj with Chain, Order of Ban Jelacic, the Service to Fatherland Certificate, and the Summer 95, Storm, and Exceptional Deeds badges.

Colonel General [as heard] Miljenko Crnjac was appointed head of the Military Department in the office of the president of the republic.

Major General [as heard] Miljenko Crnac was born in Pavlovci near Nova Gradiska in 1960. He has a degree in political sciences. He was a unit commander and a brigade commander. Since 1992 he has occupied the following positions: assistant minister for personnel issues; the commander of the Karlovac Corps District. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1994. He holds the following decorations: Order of Prince Domagoj with Chain; Order of Ban Jelacic, the Service to Fatherland Certificate; and the Certificate of Fatherland's Gratitude. He was awarded the Storm and Exceptional Deeds badges.

Colonel General Josip Lucic was appointed head of the Croatian Military Academy.

Colonel General Josip Lucic was born in Posavski Podgajci in 1957. He has a degree in physical education. He has been in the post of the chief defense inspector since December 1992. He was also the commander of the 1st Guard Brigade, the deputy commander of the Main Staff of the Croatian Army, the commander of the Osijek Corps District, head of the personnel administration, and assistant minister of defense. He was promoted to the rank of colonel general in 1994. He holds the following decorations: Order of Prince Domagoj with Chain, Order of Nikola Subic Zrinski, Order of Ban Jelacic, the Service to Fatherland Certificate, and the

Certificate of Fatherland's Gratitude. He was awarded the Flash and Storm badges.

Vice Admiral Davorin Kajic was appointed assistant chief, navy, of the Main Staff of the Croatian Army.

Vice Admiral Davorin Kajic was born in Hrvatska Kostajnica in 1937. He has a degree in mechanical engineering and shipbuilding. Since August 1993 he has been assistant commander of the Croatian Navy. He was promoted to the rank of vice admiral in 1995. He holds the following decorations: Order of Nikola Subic Zrinski, Order of Ban Jelacic, Order of the Croatian Trefoil, and the Service to Fatherland Certificate.

Colonel General Imra Agotic was appointed assistant chief, air force and air defense, of the Main Staff of the Croatian Army.

Colonel General Imra Agotic was born in Gorjani in Djakovo municipality in 1943. He graduated from the Air Force Academy and has a degree in political sciences. He has been the commander of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defense since February 1992. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1991 and of colonel general in 1995. He holds the following decorations: Order of Nikola Subic Zrinski, Order of Ban Jelacic, the Service to Fatherland Certificate, and the Certificate of Fatherland's Gratitude. He was awarded the Flash, Summer 92, and Storm badges.

Vice Admiral Vid Stipetic was appointed commander of the Croatian Navy from 1 June 1996.

Vice Admiral Vid Stipetic was born in Ogulin in 1937. He graduated from the Naval Academy. In the Ministry of Defense he was head of the Croatian Navy Department, sector administration. He was in charge of the Navy sector. He has been the chief of the Croatian Navy Staff since September 1992. He was promoted to the rank of rear Admiral in 1993. He holds the following decorations: Order of Nikola Subic Zrinski, Order of Ban Jelacic, and the Service to Fatherland Certificate.

Major General Josip Culetic was appointed commander of the Croatian Air Force and Air Defense.

Major General Culetic was born in Slavonski Kobas in 1951. He graduated from the Air Force Academy. He has been staff head in the Croatian Air Force and Air Defense Command since February 1992. He was promoted to the rank of major general in 1995. He holds the following decorations: Order of Prince Domagoj with Chain, Order of Croatian Braid, and the Service to Fatherland Certificate. He was awarded the Storm badge.

Dr. Franjo Tudjman, the president of the republic and the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, has also made the following decisions:

Staff Admiral Sveto Letica was released from his duty as Croatian Navy commander and will be retired from 1 June 1996. Corps General Anton Tus was released from his duty as head of the Office for International Military Cooperation and retired. Admiral Bozidar Grubisic was released from his duty as the Croatian Army's deputy chief inspector and retired. Major General Luka Djanko was released from his duty as Bjelovar Corps District Commander and retired. Major General Vinko Vrbanac was released from his duty as chief of the Operational Command of the Croatian Army's Main Staff and retired.

The following generals of the Croatian Army have been appointed commanders of Corps Districts:

Colonel General Djuro Decak was appointed commander of the Djakovo Corps District. Major General Marjan Marekovic was appointed commander of the Karlovac Corps District. Major General Mirko Norec was appointed commander of the Knin Corps District. Major General Damir Krsticevic was appointed commander of the Pazin Corps District. Major General Milivoj Petkovic was appointed commander of the Ston Corps District. Major General Ivan Korade was appointed commander of the Varazdin Corps District.

All decisions take effect immediately.

FYROM: Italian FM Agnelli Plans Visit to Skopje

AU1803183496 Skopje MIC in English 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Italian Foreign Minister and current chairman of the EU Ministers' Council Susanna Agnelli will arrive on an official visit to the Republic of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM] this afternoon.

Ms. Agnelli is scheduled to meet President Kiro Gligorov, Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski, and Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski.

The visit of the Italian Foreign Minister comes at a time when the country is entering negotiations with the European Union on the future agreement on cooperation, MAKPRESS reports.

Susanna Agnelli told NOVA MAKEDONIJA's correspondent in Rome that the visit to Skopje is a result of Italy's attitude, especially as the EU chairman, as a country which has proven its particular maturity in regard to the Yugoslav crisis, and which has shown that it can contribute considerably to stabilization in this part of Europe. In this context, this is an important motif for being satisfied with the beginning of a full normalization of relations between the Government in Skopje and the neighborly states, and it is our wish to complete this process as soon as possible.

"In the discussions with the Macedonian authorities, I would like to express Italy's and the EU's support of the further consolidation of the political institutions and the economy in this small country. I will particularly underline the EU's wish to institutionalize the relations with the Government in Skopje, starting from the signing of an agreement on cooperation.

"In addition, this visit is a chance to re-examine the bilateral relations and perspectives of strengthening the cooperation between our two countries," Susanna Agnelli told NOVA MAKEDONIJA in Rome.

FYROM: Envoy Proposes Thessaloniki Trade Office

AU1803143796 Skopje Radio Macedonia Network in Macedonian 1430 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ljupco Arsovski, head of the Macedonian Liaison Office in Athens, was received today by Greek Prime Minister Kostas Simitis. The talks focused on economic cooperation, and as Ljupco Arsovski reports, he presented the idea of opening a trade office in Thessaloniki. We asked him to speak for the Afternoon News Broadcast.

[Ljupco Arsovski, recorded] Naturally, one of the main topics was economic cooperation, that is, how to expand it, as well as communication in general between the two countries, how to build mutual confidence, encourage more trade between the two nations, and good neighborly relations. On this occasion, I emphasized our interest in broader cooperation on the economic plane, in which, as far as I can see, companies from northern Greece have a great interest, and the port of Thessaloniki is located here. It is of great interest for us to start cooperation regarding this port for the longer term. At the same time, I expressed an idea, a wish, and a specific proposal to open a trade consular office in Thessaloniki, which would be of great service for the citizens of the two countries in the period when economic, trade, and tourist relations are being developed. I also briefed the prime minister on the economic situation in our country, about work under way in our country, such as some capital constructions like the "Kozjak" dam, the tenders for Skopje Airport, the construction of Gevgelija-Thessaloniki highway, and so on. The meeting was really cordial and it took place in a friendly atmosphere.

FYROM: Commentary Views Changes in Greek Policy

AU1803201896 Skopje MIC in English 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the last few days, not even the tacky phrase about film speed can any longer be applied to what has been going on on the plan of development of the Macedonian-Greek [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM-Greek] relations, in a positive sense. The speed is incredible, or at least it seems to be, compared to the complete standstill in the last five years. It seems that Greece has experienced its catharsis, it has crossed the Rubicon and admitted what everyone has known for so long, that there is no way of banning the term "Macedonia" from the name. This is Athens's key move, both towards itself and towards the Greek public. This fact is an enormous step forward and we have to wait and see the results.

Generally speaking, it is not quite apparent how big that change is, but, judging by the statements and events of these last two weeks, the intensity of this, conditionally said, turn, can be seen. Thus, the statement of Greek Foreign Minister Teodoros Pangalos that "it is better to talk less about Alexander of Macedonia, and more about what's going on around us," are probably meant to suggest this to some Macedonian politician, and the familiar forms for preparing one's own public opinion also appeared, in the shape of a memorandum of the Greek intellectuals, asking to "quickly close the question that has been burdening the Greek foreign policy for years." At the gathering in Thessaloniki this week, Prime Minister Simitis sent out the message that the "policy of peace and cooperation represents the only path to progress in the region." Only 24 hours after Macedonian Foreign Minister Ljubomir Frckovski clearly articulated the stand that there is no compromise with the name, it was revealed simultaneously in Athens and Skopje that he has been invited to visit Athens.

In the reports of our correspondent from Athens it can be often read that "politics is not important—economy is." This differs drastically from what used to be the cornerstone of the Greek foreign policy until yesterday, which was prepared to subordinate everything to politics, regardless of the economic costs. In view of this, it seems that the "spirit of Papandreou," the spirit of open antagonism that he and his Government used to promote, is probably dead. The relaxation of relations, the direct contacts, if it comes to them, will score points for our southern neighbor, as well as for the Macedonian diplomacy—points that come as a result of the past efforts and battles.

In any event, the speed of events promises that something is changing and that perhaps, some kind of end is in sight. Unfortunately, the hard reality and empiricism tell us that we should not hope that the problem that Greece has with Macedonia's name will be entirely bridged in a matter of one, or three months. World diplomacy is familiar with examples when two states existed successfully although they had problems between them.

On the other hand, maybe the announcements about the visit of the Macedonian foreign minister to Athens, at which "the name will not be discussed," hides the formula that will join the other "triple" or "double" formulas which have been in the game so far? Since, if Greece manages to swallow that, and to receive the Macedonian minister in the middle of Athens, who certainly won't use the "name reference" over there, there won't be many serious reasons why Macedonia shouldn't shut one eye if Greece continues to use the temporary name a while longer. The latter hides a different danger, which is the card the Greek diplomacy might also be playing on—to present itself as the most yielding side deliberately, so as to gain support, or, at least to project Macedonia as the side whose turn it is to agree to compromise. Let's hope that this time, that feeling is owed only to the inherent Balkan paranoia and that Athens's outstretched hand is a sincere gesture.

But, in situations like this, it must be warned that the new spirit of relaxed atmosphere between two countries is recognized by the small things: The (non) harassment at the border, the change in the intentional aggravation of the atmosphere of tension and malicious propaganda. If more attention is paid to these seemingly minor details, then the joint project might even succeed, but if despite everything that is done on a political plan, the queues in front of the Greek office in Skopje remain, the waiting at the border and the harassment of our citizens—then all the high politics and declarative rapprochement will be in vain....

FYROM: New Assembly Chairman Outlines Tasks

AU1903103596 Skopje VECER in Macedonian 16-17 Mar 96 pp 4-5

[Interview with Assembly Chairman Tito Petkovski by Vera V. Adzigova and Sasko Dimevski; place and date not given: "Timing of Democracy"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [VECER] In your opinion, what are the most important tasks of the parliament?

[Petkovski] Of course, the most important thing is to complete the judiciary power. This process is under way and we must have it completed by 1 July. I hope that we will be able to respect the legal deadline. Normally, one of the priorities is the adoption of the election laws package. We do have regulations for the parliamentary, but we do not have them for the local elections, and therefore one of our first tasks is to adopt the law on the election of local self-management bodies.

[VECER] Will you wait for the government to submit a proposal, or will you force this through a parliamentary initiative? The Liberals have already announced that they will offer such a package.

[Petkovski] I have not heard of such an offer, but all initiatives are legitimate. I would be pleased if such an initiative came from the opposition or from the independent members of parliament. Because the regulations for collecting signatures for early elections or for some other questions for which a referendum is needed are not precisely set up, it is the Assembly's obligation to adopt such a law in the first place. Since some opposition and nonparliamentary parties have already articulated initiatives for early elections, we must have a clearly designed procedure for this. The fact that we do not have it now gives grounds for a great variety of interpretations. It seems that the constitutional solutions in this field are not sufficient. We had the opportunity to hear from the minister of justice that the government is preparing a proposal for such a law. It will be even better if, as you say, the opposition announces that they are coming out with such a text. The most important is to present this regulation to the assembly as soon as possible so as to eliminate, among the rest, some speculations in the sense that the government is consciously making obstructions in connection with this problem and thus eliminating the possibility for early elections.

Election Laws

[VECER] It is said that the government will adopt these laws only at the moment when it, itself, decides to go to the elections. Can this be applied now, with reference to such agitated requests?

[Petkovski] This administration is not in such a condition. We must adopt a law on the territorial division of the Republic of Macedonia simply because we have to hold elections for bodies of local self-management. We must adopt an election law for these bodies solely because we do not have such a regulation. For the sake of constructing its credibility among the people, this assembly does not have the right to suffocate or obstruct initiatives of members of parliament on a new law on elections. On the contrary, with the experience from the first and the second parliamentary elections, as well as the indications of the Council of Europe, it is our duty to come out with a proposal on a new election law that will be exposed to more substantial debates among the political parties and scientific circles.

[VECER] Which other laws will be given priority in the Assembly?

[Petkovski] In the sphere of the political system, we have to adopt the criminal code; the laws on criminal, processing, executive, and administrative procedure; the law on the city of Skopje; on radio transmission; on the public defender; and even the law on the coat of arms. We also have the duty to adopt laws on culture and on higher education. In the sphere of economic relations, it is our priority to adopt laws on denationalization, on electricity, customs tariffs, trade associations, telecommunications.... Nearly all laws in the sphere of customs duties and taxes are being processed in the Assembly. These are the most important tasks, but it certainly does not mean that other initiatives of citizens and members of parliament on other issues will not be taken into consideration.

FYROM: Cokrevski Emphasizes Responsibility of Police

AU1903120996 Skopje VECER in Macedonian 18 Mar 96 p 9

[Article by S. Dimevski: "We Will Work on a Regular Basis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Professor Tomislav Cokrevski has been given the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the newly reconstructed cabinet of Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski. This action by the prime minister was a surprise for many, particularly because he is a university professor who has been not engaged in any political parties or policy for years.

Cokrveski's field is sociology and he has spent nearly all his working life at the Faculty of Law in Skopje, teaching sociology for many years. In his youth, he worked for a while in the Institute for Sociological and Legal Research, and in the sixties, he was Republican Secretary for education, science, and culture for one mandate. With the beginning of the state's democratization, together with some others who shared the same opinions, he formed and headed the Forum for Human Rights of Macedonia [The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia—FYROM], and later on he became the president of "St. Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje.

Lively Energy

Although heading the Ministry of Internal Affairs takes all his working day, Mr. Cokrevski does not intend to give up his position as a professor. For he is proceeding to teach two subjects—sociology of law and communications—at the Faculty. He has also prepared the largest part of the literature for these two subjects. He wants to maintain his links with the students and the Faculty because, as he says, this is where his lively energy comes from, which he hopes will help sustain him in everything he has now taken on.

As for what made him become the first policeman in the state and about his future role in Crvenkovski's Cabinet, Cokrevski explains that, being the oldest of the ministers, he is naturally hopeful that his experience and knowledge will find expression. He "understands" his place among the ministers as a clear indicator and sign from the young prime minister that he intends to form a serious government in which there will be people who will do their best to accomplish what they have decided upon. He also emphasizes that as minister he will make efforts to remove the concept that the government is guilty for all the bad things in the state, while all the others are right.

"It is true that the people who are most directly involved in the construction of the state, in solving the problems, occasionally make some mistakes, and therefore deserve to be criticized. However, the people who have now agreed to resolve the problems must be supported. We are facing a very important period in the construction of our statehood, and we must not accept criticisms without being offered better solutions. We must develop the institutions, we must adopt laws and allow them to function, we must accept the European and the world's standards, but not in a black-and-white fashion," Cokrevski explains.

Service for the Citizens

Cokrevski is aware that the Ministry of Internal Affairs will be under constant observation by the public and the political parties in the forthcoming period and that there will be a constant reaction to its work. So, it is of great importance for him to establish functions and relations in the Ministry of Internal Affairs that will be in the service of the citizens. The people must realize that the police are there for their sake, and not vice versa—that they are here for the sake of the police.

"I am fully aware of the situation, and I do not have any illusions that things can be changed overnight. I know that a long process is ahead of us. Nevertheless, since deep in me, in my convictions, there is a democratic determination for respect of human rights and liberties, which are founded in the Constitution, I believe that the police and the Ministry of Internal Affairs must be more extensively established on the same principles, although the police, in its concept and classical function, is repressive," Cokrevski says.

Cokrevski believes that the construction of a new, more open relationship toward public opinion and the citizens is one of the challenges of his new position, as well as better communications and understanding. The construction of the new image of the police, which had started during Frckovski's mandate, by which a lot will have to be changed in the external as well as in the internal understanding of the role of the policeman, will continue.

According to Cokrevski, the transformation that has already started in the Ministry of Internal Affairs will soon have to be finished, because it affects the functioning of the whole system. The Ministry of Internal Affairs will have to undertake overall restructuring so as to respond to the most frequent criminal activities and the interests of other countries for us in particular.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs will have to finalize actions concerning the opening of political files, for which Cokrevski believes that the best solution will be found. Nevertheless, the greatest challenge will be to start a showdown with organized crime, bribery, and corruption. According to Cokrevski, this will be the permanent duty of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and it will not be forsaken for a single moment, and this is exactly why he believes that it will breed results. The struggle against these developments will have to be waged on a regular basis, because if the state wants to achieve results in this field, it will have to construct an institutional relationship toward all these events. This is why the ministry has some projects under way that encompass every problem separately—the situation is analyzed, the key points of their appearance are defined, and finally operational measures are undertaken. According to Cokrevski, these programs have been properly set up and well developed.

Poland: Ministry Issues Protest Over Jakarta Incident

LD1803175696 Warsaw PAP in Polish 1444 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Warsaw, 18 Mar—Poland issued a protest today against the breach by the Indonesian side of the security conditions during the visit of the Polish prime minister in Jakarta. The charge d'affaires of the Indonesian Embassy in Warsaw was summoned to the Polish Foreign Affairs Ministry [MSZ], MSZ spokesman Pawel Dobrowolski said.

He added that the Portuguese authorities had already given their consent for the admission of two East Timorese residents who had forced their way into the Polish Embassy in Jakarta today. The incident occurred during Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz's visit.

This is the second incident since January of this year involving a break-in by East Timor residents of the Polish diplomatic mission in Jakarta, and one of several of foreign embassies there. Since September 1995, Portugal has accepted 72 Timor residents (until 1975 East Timor was a Portuguese colony).

All of the Timorese residents left Jakarta for Lisbon under the auspices of the International Red Cross. Red Cross representatives are already involved in the matter. At the moment, the Timorese residents are awaiting departure at the Polish Embassy. No embassy employees are in any danger, Dobrowolski said.

Poland: Warsaw Press Reaction to Primakov Visit

WS1803134696

[FBIS Report] On 16 March the weekend editions of three major Warsaw vernacular dailies commented on Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Yevgieniy Primakov's visit to Poland.

RZECZPOSPOLITA, a centrist daily, published on page five a 400-word commentary by Slawomir Popowski entitled "Dialogue with Differences." The author points out that "Poland wants to have good relations with Russia but, at the same time, as was proved by Foreign Minister Rosati's statements, is determined to defend the West European and pro-Atlantic policies it has chosen to pursue. The Russians place emphasis on something else: They want dialogue and development of cooperation. However, they see this primarily as a way out of the deadlock over NATO and European security. The difference seems to be inconsequential, but it must be borne in mind." After recalling the Russian argument against the expansion of NATO, Popowski asks whether it is possible for Poland and Russia to reach a compromise in such a situation. He answers the question by saying that, "judging by the statements made by Minister Rosati, Warsaw is open to compromise proposals regarding the architecture of the future European security system. However, it should be stressed that, just like Prague, it explicitly says that it is interested in obtaining the status of a full NATO member." Popowski assesses that "in such a situation, the most important thing for both sides and for our partners in the West is that dialogue can actually be conducted." According to the RZECZPOSPOLITA journalist, it is important that we do not "let ourselves be misled by ideas presented by the pragmatically minded foreign affairs minister, who passed his tests during difficult disarmament negotiations. We should also not for a moment forget our own national interests. Incidentally, the Russians most highly respect partners who are specific and determined and who are able to defend their interests."

TRYBUNA, a leftist daily supporting the governing coalition, carried an untitled, 250-word commentary by Wieslaw S. Debski, which appeared under the front-page "One Hundred Words" rubric. Debski recalls that "Minister Yevgeniy Primakov proposes that Poland give up its membership in NATO in return for security guarantees." He adds that "all of the representatives of the Polish authorities gave a clear and unequivocal answer: Poles have their own idea as to how to ensure the security of their own country—integration with NATO as the only institution able to guarantee stability in Europe." Debski notes that "the difference of opinion is quite fundamental." He believes that, although "it is worthwhile to keep explaining one's intentions to each other, a compromise in this area should not be expected!" According to Debski, "This should not entail halting the political dialogue and cooperation in other areas. Both sides seemed to share this view during the talks in Warsaw. If this really was the case, it means that the prospects for Aleksander Kwasniewski's visit to Moscow, which is scheduled for April, look good. It also means good prospects for future bilateral relations between Poland and Russia."

GAZETA SWIATECZNA, the weekend edition of GAZETA WYBORCZA, which is a large-circulation left-of-center daily, published an untitled, 70-word commentary by Edward Krzemien. Krzemien writes that "Primakov's visit proved that it is possible to differ without quarreling and that the present governing coalition is able to defend Poland's interests from Russia. Minister Rosati has passed his most difficult test so far." He adds that, although Russia "showed a quieter face, it is necessary to wait a little longer to see whether gestures will be followed by a real improvement in our relations and to assess how greatly this will affect the process of NATO expansion."

Poland: More on Kwasniewski Television Interview

WS1803145496 Warsaw TRYBUNA in Polish 18 Mar 96 p 6

[Article by Z.S.: "President Kwasniewski on Foreign Policy; Patience, Consistency, and Dialogue"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *"We should not expect that such events as the Russian foreign minister's visit to Poland or the Polish president's visit to Moscow will result in a breakthrough or have an immediate effect," Aleksander Kwasniewski said in the "Racja Stanu" ["Raison d'Etat"] television program, which focused on the recent talks with Primakov.*

"The important thing is that a need for dialogue was recognized. The dialogue is difficult and, for this reason, requires patience and consistency. It is possible to resolve specific problems and to discuss what needs to be further specified. It is important that we do not lose time. In this way, we are showing the West that no threats are coming from this region.

Patience is also necessary where NATO is concerned. As for our membership in the EU, we will see what stand the West takes on this issue at the intergovernmental conference and whether it keeps to the schedule, in line with which negotiations should begin six months after the conference ends; this will be a test of the West's readiness on this issue. However, what we do ourselves will be decisive here. For this reason, Aleksander Kwasniewski fears political quarrels and, first of all, omissions in the process of preparation for EU membership.

As president, Kwasniewski wants to implement Polish foreign policy not only through official visits, but also through unofficial, informal meetings because such personal contacts make for mutual understanding.

According to the Polish president, we should remove the stereotypes that have been perpetuated in Poland's relations with some countries. Therefore, we should be more active in culture, exchange of young people, etc. Also, particularly in the case of Russia, we should use ordinary language to discuss all of the difficult things in our modern history.

If any viewers expected to hear threats, rebukes, or cheap promises during this interview, they must have been disappointed. President Kwasniewski understands foreign policy as consistent, difficult activity.

Poland: Foreign Minister Rosati Interviewed

LD1803171496 Warsaw Radio Zet Network in Polish 0715 GMT 18 Mar 96

[Interview with Polish Foreign Minister Dariusz Rosati by Krzysztof Skowronski in Warsaw—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Skowronski] The Guest of Radio Zet today is Minister of Foreign Affairs Dariusz Rosati. Good morning.

[Rosati] Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. [passage omitted]

[Skowronski] And what is the weather forecast for Polish foreign policy?

[Rosati] I think it is close to the weather outside the window today.

[Skowronski] That is, a temperature near zero, but sunny?

[Rosati] Well, in any case with a tendency toward improvement and warming.

[Skowronski] What are the results of [Russian foreign minister] Primakov's visit to Warsaw?

[Rosati] Well, this was a very useful visit, I wish to say, first because a meeting at such a high level took place, which means that political dialogue between Poland and Russia has been restored. These contacts have been lacking over the past few years, and I think that, when there is no possibility of dialogue, quite simply there is no possibility of an improvement in relations. And, in the relations between Poland and Russia, there is a whole series of cases that do indeed require improvement and discussion.

[Skowronski] What requires improvement in the first instance?

[Rosati] Well, of course, there is the issue of security and of the system of European security, which requires, at least in the first phase, the presentation of the fundamental standpoints of both sides.

[Skowronski] Here you differed. There are various standpoints that... [pauses]

[Rosati] Here, indeed, there are various standpoints, diametrically different, I would say, but the benefit of this meeting is surely the fact that we presented each other with our mutual points of view in great detail.

[Skowronski] What are the chances not of agreeing to one standpoint but of convincing the Russian side, or the Russian side convincing us, that it is not worth going into NATO? [sentence as heard]

[Rosati] Well, it is necessary to talk. I think that these arguments I have presented will now be the subject of analyses in Moscow, and I judge that there is some possibility that the Russian stance might be subject to a certain evolution.

[Skowronski] And what about bilateral relations between Poland and Russia?

[Rosati] We also discussed the state of bilateral relations. There is a whole series of these matters that are unresolved or in the course of being processed, but a certain impulse was required for certain agreements to be finalized. There is a whole series of matters in the framework of, for instance, international transport, legal and treaty matters, economic matters. These matters were discussed by us, and here we have a favorable stance on the Russian side, to bring about the quickest possible contraction of those agreements that are already prepared. Perhaps some of these agreements will be signed during the visit to Moscow of President Kwasniewski.

[Skowronski] As regards international transport, what about the case of the notorious highway linking Belarus and Kaliningrad?

[Rosati] Well, I think this matter has been so much discussed in the media that there really is nothing else to add here. There is no... [pauses]

[Skowronski] The program Wiadomosci yesterday reported one fact, that Minister of Transport Boguslaw Liberadzki, contrary to the stand of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accepted, favored, the construction of a transit road from the Kaliningrad oblast to Belarus, to Minsk.

[Rosati] It would be best to ask Minister Liberadzki what he favors. I judge that, in the talks I held with Minister Liberadzki, there was full accordance of views. There is no question of some sort of such, of special treatment or the creation of some sort of a corridor in the form of a highway, for instance.

[Skowronski] You met the foreign minister of Russia for the first time? This was the first time you spoke with him?

[Rosati] I had contact with him once, a dozen or so years ago, when he was still a professor and economist and I also was. But, since that time, in practice, we have not known each other.

[Skowronski] And now? How did you receive the foreign minister of Russia?

[Rosati] I think he is an interesting interlocutor. He is an interlocutor who has enormous experience, experience from the period when Russia, or then the Soviet Union, was indeed a world superpower. This experience is in my view both a certain plus and nonetheless a certain burden because there is also a tendency to look at security matters in a manner, well, somewhat traditional, I would say, precisely in the categories of a balance of blocs, a balance of forces, a balance of fear.

[Rosati] In Prague, we are having a meeting between the foreign ministers of the countries of Central and East Europe and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Mr. Christopher is going to Moscow. This is a meeting that will be devoted to the exchange of views on the subject of, well, mainly matters of security, the continuing fate of the widening of NATO; a certain briefing, this is a case of a certain briefing, both of Mr. Christopher by all of us here in East Europe and also an opportunity to hear the standpoint of the United States on these matters that interest us.

[Skowronski] But these standpoints are well known, so what are these meetings for? Because these meetings take place once a month or once a week, seemingly ever more frequently now.

[Rosati] No, no, no. Such a meeting last took place last year. These are not such frequent meetings, and, in this time, since last year, a whole series of things have nonetheless taken place that are worth discussing. We will wish, in the end, in light of recent facts—such as, for instance, the change, a certain change in the foreign policy of Russia expressed in this alternative order of priorities—we wish quite simply to know the standpoint of the United States on these matters, also on the issue of the further procedure as regards the widening of NATO.

[Skowronski] And what will this issue of the further procedure look like?

[Rosati] Well, this will precisely become apparent after the meeting in Prague. We wish to hear what the standpoint of the secretary of state is on this issue. We will present our standpoint, which is well known.

[Presenter] The next meeting in Turin?

[Rosati] The meeting in Turin is, I must say here, a success for our diplomacy because there were at first no plans for the countries associated with the European Union to participate in the conference that opens the intergovernmental conference. Here we succeeded, literally at the last throw, in forcing, as it were, from the countries of the Union the participation of the ministers of foreign affairs, and, thanks to this very cooperative standpoint of Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, the foreign minister of Italy, we have been invited there, to Turin.

[Skowronski] Invited to a dinner, which will also be this kind of quick briefing and report about what has taken place at... [pauses]

[Rosati] Yes, because this ceremonial part, of the opening of the conference—it does not have an especially substantive character. [as heard] This is quite simply the opening of a conference that is to continue for the whole year, at least, or at any rate such are the plans. On the other hand, our presence there during this opening has a symbolic character. It witnesses the fact that the EU sees that the conference that is to decide on the future of Europe may not take place without the participation of the countries that will participate in this Union in the future.

[Skowronski] Yesterday, Mr. Soros said at the university, at the Main School of Commerce [SGH], that Poland had lost the best opportunity for association with, for entry into, the European Community. Do you also harbor such an impression, that this best moment has been let slip?

[Rosati] That is, I harbor the impression that the standpoint of the Western countries is indeed undergoing a certain evolution. We no longer have our five minutes in history. This period of enthusiasm and euphoria associated with the exit of Poland from the post-Soviet arrangement has passed in Western Europe. We are surely at the stage of hard negotiations, in which it is costs and benefits that count. But, well, that is precisely how it was to have been. It is difficult to expect that we were to have been treated specially all of the time.

[Skowronski] What [word indistinct] is the most difficult thing in our negotiations?

[Rosati] Well, there are two matters. First, we must demonstrate that we are adapting our internal legislation and economic structure to this, to these requirements of the EU. And, on the other hand, we must also negotiate very toughly with the Union and very consistently seek to convince the countries of the Union that they will also gain from this widening and that this...[pauses]

[Presenter] And what arguments will be used here?

[Rosati] This is not just a matter of costs for them. Well, above all, we are opening up a market for them that is very big and potentially very rich. Second, precisely through this adoption of legislation that is in accordance with the legislation of the Union we are creating such a zone with unified economic management rules, which reduces costs, reduces uncertainty, and this has very measurable effects in economic terms.

[Presenter] How do our relations with the Czechs, the Slovaks, and the Hungarians look?

[Rosati] These are very good relations. We have excellent political and economic relations with all of these partners from the Visegrad Group. Of course, it is necessary to seek that they be still better, especially from the economic point of view, since the potential for exchange is significantly greater than that which we see at present in the foreign trade statistics.

[Skowronski] Do we at present have some kind of joint foreign policy?

[Rosati] This does not exist yet, albeit I must say that, after many years of attempts, we are succeeding in bringing about, at least at the moment, at this stage, this kind of initial exchange of information. It could be that certain components of the coordination of standpoints will be possible soon.

[Skowronski] With Lithuania, too?

[Rosati] With Lithuania, it can be said without exaggeration that relations entered a new phase after the visit of President Kwasniewski. This was, this was a breakthrough visit in the sense that there was probably a success, finally, in dispersing this very deeply rooted lack of trust of the Lithuanians toward us. I think that contact has indeed been established between the presidents, which, well, justifies the assertion that, if any problems were to appear, the contact of these two persons might indeed be extraordinarily helpful, direct contact, in resolving these matters.

I also have in mind the issues associated with, for instance, the existence of a Polish Polonia there, in Lithuania ["Polonia" is the Polish word for Poles, or persons of Polish origin, who once consciously emigrated and are resident abroad], which has a whole series of problems to resolve. And here this close contact between the presidents might be very helpful.

[Skowronski] You have been criticized for a lack of outline concept and vision for our relations with Ukraine.

[Rosati] Well, yes, of course, everyone has the right to his own view. I judge that this is not a justified criticism. We do have a vision of relations with Ukraine. I have spoken of this many times. We are very interested in Ukraine being a state that is democratic, independent, and we are ready, to the extent that we are able, to support these efforts of Ukraine. In the near future, we are expecting a visit by the foreign minister of Ukraine, and, in three months' time, President Kuchma will be making an official visit to us here in Poland. I think that relations with Ukraine are developing very well and properly, so I quite simply feel these kinds of opinions to be unjustified.

[Skowronski] We spoke of the diplomatic calendar. After Turin, the next thing will be the summit in Moscow. What decisions will be made in the course of that summit?

[Rosati] Well, we have already spoken of this. We anticipate that Polish-Russian relations will be raised then to the highest level. We also anticipate the signing of a number of, perhaps six, perhaps eight, international agreements, precisely on these matters that I have spoken about, plus matters of youth exchange and also the issues associated with certain consular matters.

But the main aim of this visit is this opening up to dialogue and the establishment of contacts between, between the presidents of both states, which contacts have for a number of years, as is well known, in practice not functioned.

[Skowronski] How did you take the recent decision of the [Russian] Duma on the fact that the Soviet Union ought to exist and on the annulment of the agreement on the dissolution of the Soviet Union?

[Rosati] Well, you know, we will be studying this matter and observing these events that are taking place in Russia with great attention. Of course, relations between Russia and the countries that are former republics of the Soviet Union are relations between them. These are not relations that relate to us directly, albeit of course it is not possible, it is not possible, to hide the fact that what is taking place in Russia and the relationship of Russia to other countries has enormous significance for us.

It is still too early to undertake some sort of decisions or else to issue some sort of far-going statements.

[Skowronski] What is the most difficult thing in diplomacy and in being the head of Polish diplomacy?

[Rosati] Oh, there are lots of difficulties, starting from matters of enormous significance such as entry to NATO or the EU, when our diplomats or our diplomacy stands in the face of enormous challenges, having to discuss with the countries of West Europe or with such superpowers as the United States. These discussions are often continued in positions that are, from positions that are not always, that I put it thus, ones of equal rights, yes? On the other hand, we have altogether down-to-earth problems, such as personnel, such as buildings, such as a lack of money for day-to-day matters. So, the catalogue of problems and difficulties is a very big one, I would say, but so what? It is necessary to function in such conditions as we are given to function in. There is no other way out. [passage omitted]

Poland: Interior Minister's Aide on UOP, MSW Reform

WS1503154196 Warsaw POLITYKA in Polish 9 Mar 96 p 29

[Article by Janusz Zemke, deputy of the Democratic Left Alliance and a member of the Administration and Internal Affairs Commission and the Advisory Committee of the interior minister: "The President's Intelligence"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The issue of positioning the Office of State Protection [UOP] is stirring up political emotions. Some support retaining the status quo, others want UOP extracted from the Ministry of Internal Affairs [MSW] and subordinated to the prime minister. I believe, however, that the positioning of UOP is not the most important problem facing the MSW.

The MSW employs 198,000 officers and soldiers, as compared with the approximated 6,000 officers employed by UOP—a mere 3 percent of the entire working force of the ministry. The UOP operations that cause the emotions of politicians to run so high do not draw as much attention from the ordinary citizen, and rightly so. It would not be wise to limit the improvement of MSW operations exclusively to changing the positioning of UOP. It would be equally bad if the new heads of the ministry focused their attention on this issue. UOP is only one of six services of the MSW. Far more significant are the operations of the Police, the Fire Department, and the Border Guards, institutions with which citizens have direct contact and that are truly responsible for their safety.

However, the debate on UOP continues, and there is no reason to avoid it provided we do not lose our sense of proportion. The discussion to date demonstrates that the service and the materials it collects are considered of utmost importance by successive ministers. The remaining services are thus treated as less significant, which causes problems considered vital by citizens to be more difficult to solve. I have been observing the marginalization of all services, except UOP, for many years. In a sense, it is a part of the heritage of the Polish People's Republic that we have not yet succeeded in doing away with. Only now, after a lot of effort by parliament and the heads of the MSW, could priorities be changed and more money allocated to the police. I think it would be very dangerous if this type of thinking about the real priorities of the ministry were abandoned in the course of the debate on the MSW that has become dominated by the issue of the secret services.

Those who debate reform in the MSW have a short memory. The changes that took place in the Ministry after 1990 have been almost completely forgotten. These changes led not to the adoption of entirely new legal solutions, but, most of all, to a far-reaching independence of all of the services. Although these services operate within the MSW, they are in fact very independent and enjoy the status of central institutions. The intertwinement of various sections, a characteristic feature of the MSW before 1989, has been eliminated.

Now the question arises as to whether the second stage of reform is needed and what it should consist of.

This second stage could consist of—and I think this variant deserves serious consideration—establishing an Intelligence Office and situating it beyond the MSW. This is a method that has been adopted by the majority of democratic states (most recently even by Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus), which extracted intelligence from the secret services and separated it from counterintelligence. There are many arguments supporting such a division. Most of all, intelligence and counterintelligence have entirely different areas of interest. Intelligence deals with what goes on beyond the borders of the country and employs different forms and methods of operation. By rounding up foreign citizens to cooperate, intelligence in a way violates the law of other countries. Counterintelligence, which operates within the borders of the country, must strictly observe domestic laws.

There is one more reason to seriously consider separating the intelligence services—changes carried out in recent years have undoubtedly sapped their strength. I feel there is no synchronization between the foreign services and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Cooperation. Meanwhile, there is no room for naive assumptions that we should refrain from doing something others do. Offices and institutions working abroad should coordinate their operations. The intelligence services cannot be a lone ranger. Separating the intelligence services will be no revolution. Neither will it be very expensive or upset MSW logistics. Our intelligence services are merely a subunit of UOP. They have their own technical units, and their head enjoys far-reaching freedom. Perhaps in the future the chief of the Intelligence Office should be appointed by the president at the motion of the minister, just like the chief of General Staff or heads of the military districts are appointed. From the point of view of state interests, the chief of intelligence is no less important than the chief of a military district.

Once the intelligence services are separated from the MSW, UOP should continue to carry out primarily counterintelligence operations. Not many people are aware that, by amending the so-called police laws last year, we considerably broadened the scope of operations of the counterintelligence services, which are currently responsible not only for invigilating intelligence networks—in other words, classical counterintelligence—but also deal with the largest and most complex economic crimes, terrorism, mafias, and all the rest of the new problems we are finding difficult to solve. Broadening the authority of the counterintelligence services was a very controversial issue, yet the legislature agreed to accept such solutions on the premise that the police were unable to deal with these issues single-handedly. It is a widespread international practice to delegate more than one service to combat the most dangerous crimes. Now that the competence of the counterintelligence services has been broadened, further steps should be taken; UOP should focus more attention on these issues.

I have not yet formed an opinion—and I believe it remains an open question—as to whether UOP, carrying out mainly counterintelligence activities, should remain within the MSW. Its positioning should be in accordance with the logic of the state administration reform. If the Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs is established, UOP should not remain within the structure. If, however, the MSW is retained in its current shape, a reformed UOP would fit in very well. First of all, the scope of the state administration reform and the functions the administration is to perform have to be clearly defined.

It seems that there are many arguments for establishing a Ministry of Administration and Internal Affairs and joining the Police, the National Fire Department, and the Border Guards with local authorities. We tend to fail to notice that the MSW makes many decisions concerning the citizens that should be consulted with the local authorities—for example, issues related to border crossings, consent to sell real estate to foreign citizens, the operations of municipal guards or the Fire Department, etc. There would be no place for UOP within such a structure. It should then remain independent, subordinated, for example, directly to the prime minister.

I do believe, however, that, regardless of what changes are made, a secret services committee should be established at the prime minister's office. It is currently unclear who defines the tasks of these services. Everyone generally acknowledges that this is the responsibility of the interior minister, but he cannot be the only person to make such decisions. In most countries there are small committees grouping the interior minister, the foreign minister, the defense minister, and the chiefs of secret services that deal with such matters. A presidential plenipotentiary should also sit on such a committee so as to ensure that everyone is aware of his responsibilities and t prevent rivalry between the state organs.

The second stage of reforming the MSW should be carried out not only by the governing coalition, but also by major opposition forces. The issue could be debated via the forum of the interior minister's Advisory Committee or the future National Security Council. No reforms should be launched, however, without relatively wide political approval of their direction and target.

Poland: Ongoing Reshuffles Within Army Criticized

WS1503160396 Poznan WPROST in Polish
17 Mar 96 pp 32-33

[Article by Miroslaw Cielemecki: "The New Model of Command Over the Polish Army Is a Caricature of the U.S. One. Dobrzanski's Test Range"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the opinion of many politicians, General Tadeusz Wilecki, chief of the General Staff, who was seen as Lech Walesa's man and confidant of [former Presidential Chancellery Chief] Mieczyslaw Wachowski, should resign. The general's position in the Army has proved to be so firm, however, that the coalition has not decided to oust him. It has thus been decided to downgrade the General Staff's role to deprive Wilecki of his previous influence. The structure of the Ministry of National Defense [MON] is starting to resemble the model from the era of the Warsaw Pact.

However, the Law on the Office of Defense Minister came into force on 14 February 1996. It unequivocally settles the old dispute over whom the General Staff chief should report to.

Among other thing, the result of this dispute was the famous dinner in Drawsko in September 1994. According to the new regulations, the General Staff chief, who directly reports to the [defense] minister, takes over command of the Armed Forces during peacetime on behalf of the minister. He should perform his tasks with the help of the General Staff. "If the General Staff is reduced to the role of an insignificant planning body, it will not be able to command," believes a general who wants to remain anonymous. "It is impossible to manage the Army without an efficient General Staff," one of the former defense ministers says.

The new bill gives the General Staff particular powers. Among other things, the defense minister can make decisions on issues concerning the structure, organization, and operations of the Armed Forces after advising the General Staff chief or at the latter's proposal. In a few years, when emotions around Gen. Wilecki abate, it may prove, however, that the reformed General Staff will not be able to play the role envisioned for it by legislation. Wilecki's successor, if he wants to prepare any decision, will have to shuttle between various departments that have swallowed the General Staff directorates. To command, he will have to instruct other deputy ministers. This will breed other conflicts within MON. "Another reorganization that would compensate for the General Staff's losses will then begin," a general predicts.

Defense Minister Stanislaw Dobrzanski has already inaugurated the partitioning of the General Staff. He began his term in office with abolishing the General Staff 18th Directorate (the economic-financial one), which was set up by [former Defense] Minister Piotr Kolodziejczyk and which comprehensively analyzed the Army's finances. However, a general budget policy was conducted by the Financial Directorate, which was subordinated to the minister. As a result of merging the two bodies by Minister Dobrzanski, the Economic-Financial Department subordinated to him has been established. Civilian control over the Army is beginning to reach to its lowest levels.

At the same time, civilian supervision understood in this way may imply something completely opposite to what was envisioned—politicizing the Army.

After all, the new department is run by a deputy minister, who is politically appointed. People from the General Staff begin to fear that, as a result of depriving the Armed Forces Command of supervision over financial structures, the system of command will cease to be hermetic.

"Some of the General Staff directorates will disappear," Dobrzanski announced. Unofficially, it is common knowledge that preparation for the further partitioning of the General Staff has already begun. For example, the Territorial Defense Directorate is to be transferred to the Defense Policy Department subordinated to Deputy [Defense] Minister Andrzej Karkoszka. It must be recalled that Territorial Defense has nothing to do with Civil Defense and is a fully military formation.

In addition, a team in charge of issues concerning MON restructuring led by Deputy Minister Karkoszka has been operating for a month now. One of its main goals is to liquidate useless posts and overlapping management structures. It is already known that the new MON will comprise five departments having the rank of deputy ministries—Defense Policy, Logistics and Armaments, Sociopolitical, Economic-Financial, and Command Over Armed Forces Departments. "It is the establishment of the Sociopolitical Department, which is nearly a true copy of the former Main Political Directorate, that raises most doubts among servicemen," says a high-ranking officer who wishes to remain anonymous.

The defense minister wants to subordinate to himself the former General Staff Sixth Directorate (the organizational one). It is listed among the most secret command structures because it administers what all armies protect most—military posts. In NATO armies, this is handled by generals.

The General Staff is to be stripped of the surveillance services as well. Deputy Minister Karkoszka gave assurances that it will be servicemen who will command the new structures, and a civilian will make decisions only at the ministerial level. However, this proves that, in the Polish Army, civilian control, which is understood too literally, is transformed into civilian command, which is not encountered in any NATO army.

From unofficial reports, it appears that a so-called Reaction Center is to be set up under the supervision of Andrzej Karkoszka. So far, nobody knows what it will do or what it will react to. Nor is it known what its connection will be with the Bureau of National Security [BBN], which is subordinated to the president. So, were those opposition politicians who very reservedly received Aleksander Kwasniewski's idea of expanding the BBN correct?

Given the new organizational structure, the General Staff will become a mere element of the Command Department. From the latest reports, it appears that it will also comprise the Air Force, Navy, and Army Commands. The first two commands already exist, and the third will probably be appointed soon. This structure is to recall the U.S. command system. However, malicious people are already talking about a transfer not of American patterns, but of their caricature. Moreover, the U.S. system has not been taken on in any modern European army.

The most important component of the new Command Department would be the Ground Troops Command. As a matter of fact, there is already a center of command over this force within the General Staff. This is the Training Inspectorate led by General Leon Komornicki. After its separation, the General Staff, along with Gen. Wilecki, would end up on the sidelines because the independent Ground Troops Command would quickly transform into an organizational Moloch. It will have to have a much larger base of supplies than the Navy and Air Force, including staff, technical, quartermaster, financial, and training supplies. Of course, this implies creating tens or even hundreds of new posts.

After incorporating the General Staff, the Ministry already has almost 4,000 posts, which is the largest number of posts among all of the ministries.

Although MON is preparing for reduction of its structures, there will often be mock operations. Unofficially, everybody knows that, for example, it is planned to merge the Military Institute of History and the Military Institute of Sociological Research, which remain in the ministry's structures, with the Academy of National Defense. This will make it possible to document personnel cutbacks. However, as a matter of fact, nothing will change because nobody knows how to curb the extremely swollen logistics departments—both the civilian one and that of the General Staff. The current reductions do not compensate for the considerable increase in the number of posts in the Financial and Sociopolitical Departments. Other "savings" such as, for example, mergers of certain auxiliary structures that provide services for the two Warsaw-based military academies produce more losses than profits.

Meanwhile, the Polish Army is becoming less and less modern. Outdated T-55 tanks account for some 53 percent of the Armored Troops' equipment. Given the current pace of modernization, it will take almost 100 years to replace them. Almost every second BWP-1 armored personnel carrier is far from being modern. The first examples of their successor—the BWP-2000, designed at the Labedy plant—will most likely arrive in the Army in a few years.

As many as 89 percent of systems used by the Missile Troops do not meet the requirements of an army of the 20th century.

Military museums would be the best place for most towed artillery pieces and large-caliber mortars. The range of self-propelled artillery pieces is too short. The Antiaircraft Troops still use the antiquated double-barreled ZU 23-2 systems. The slightly better ZSU 23-4 guns were produced as far back as the 1960's.

A considerable part of the Communications Troops' equipment is almost 30 years old. In addition, 75 percent of communications devices were installed on Star 66 tracks, which have not been produced for a long time. Over 85 percent of low power radiosets exceeded their operational life a long time ago. This year the Air Force will have to withdraw some 60 MiG-21 airplanes. So far, it is not planned to purchase new aircraft. In the 25th Air Cavalry Division, which was set up with the intention to join NATO, only one regiment has helicopters. At the same time, MON is still financing ventures that have little to do with defense. Other "essential" expenditures are increasing as well. For example, the maintenance of the Polish Armed Forces Concert Orchestra already costs over 6 million zlotys annually.

Poland: Sejm Passes Law on Foreign Capital

WS1903150596 Warsaw GAZETA SWIATECZNA in Polish 16-17 Mar 96 p 19

[Report by "HAN": "Less Bureaucracy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday the Sejm passed a law on companies with foreign capital; it removes many differences in the way Polish and foreign capital is treated in Poland. Adoption of this law was listed as one of the conditions Poland must satisfy to join the OECD, an organization that consists of the 26 richest countries of the world.

Until now, a company with foreign capital that wanted to trade in real estate, operate as a consumer-goods wholesaler, or engage in license-free production of military equipment has had to obtain permission from the privatization minister. Now this requirement has been removed.

In line with the new law, foreign law firms will no longer have to obtain ministerial licenses before starting operations in Poland. However, this has caused a lot of controversy among lawyers; thus, the issue will be resolved in a few months' time.

Permission from the Finance Ministry will be needed to set up a company with foreign capital if the assets contributed to the company were not previously deposited in an account in a Polish bank or if the foreign exchange contributed to the company has not been officially converted to zlotys at the exchange rate set by the National Bank of Poland. Permission will also be necessary if a state-owned company wants to contribute its assets to such a firm.

Poland: Minister Kaczmarek Urges Social Insurance Reform

WS1503133696 Warsaw GAZETA WYBORCZA in Polish 14 Mar 96 p 17

[Article by Artur Morka: "Privatization Minister's Conference; Retirement Pensions From Privatization"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Most of the state-owned assets should be used in the reform of the social insurance system. Therefore, as a result of postponing the reform, privatization may be rapidly halted, Privatization Minister Wieslaw Kaczmarek believes.*

Yesterday [13 March] he presented journalists with privatization plans; he explained what they look like now that the enfranchisement referendum has been held. He believes that the best solution is to enfranchise the people by reforming the social insurance system and by setting up retirement pension funds. These institutions would take over most of the companies that have not been privatized yet. Just as has been done for years in most West European states, retirement pensions would come from profits made by the funds.

Kaczmarek believes that establishment of pension funds will speed up privatization. The market (that is, the stock market, domestic and foreign investors) is not in a position to "absorb" more than 3,500 state-owned firms that are still fit to be sold. Their shares might well go into retirement pension funds, which might put them to good use.

Deputy Privatization Minister Jan Czekaj said openly that, until a law on the social insurance system is passed, privatization should be halted. There are two reasons for this: First, the pension funds should be made up of possibly the best Polish companies; second, if privatization is continued at the present rate, there may simply be not enough companies for the pension funds.

Minister Kaczmarek announced that he is going to increase the number of companies that are privatized in the stock market and that he wants the companies participating in the Mass Privatization Program to be offered on the stock market as soon as possible. However, the state would keep a stake in them in order to be able to transfer its shares to the pension funds in the future.

Kaczmarek is against the idea of establishing holding companies, which has been advertised for some time now. "I hope we will not have to form them in the power sector, as well as in the chemical and spirits industry. The establishment of holding companies means a return to the old days," the minister said. According to him, companies belonging to these branches of industry should be quickly privatized.

By the end of the third quarter of this year, the ministry will complete privatization of the last three tobacco plants that have not been privatized—the plants in Radom, Lodz, and Lublin. In the immediate future, it also wants to get rid of the 40-percent stake the State Treasury has in Rolimpex.

Poland: Gdansk Shipyard Facing Bankruptcy

LD1603200596 Warsaw TVP Television First Program Network in Polish 1830 GMT 16 Mar 96

[Relayed by Warsaw TV Polonia]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Gdansk shipyard is facing bankruptcy. The shipyard owes 15 million zlotys [Z] for power supplies to the Gdansk Power Enterprise. Bank Handlowy in Warsaw, which is owed 20 million by the shipyard, has decided not to carry out conciliation procedures [sentence as heard].

[Unidentified correspondent] [Passage omitted] The negative decision by the board of the bank puts the shipyard in a very difficult position, even more so because the Gdansk Power Enterprise has announced that it will submit a motion for bankruptcy proceedings to be instigated.

Prime Minister Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz has admitted that the financial condition of the yard has been investigated for several weeks on his instructions.

[Begin Cimoszewicz recording] I would say that the prospects are quite bad because, for a dozen or so years, the yard was treated as a place for playing politics rather than for effective work and good business. For this reason, the shipyard is now about Z5 billion in the red. Each year brings further losses. So far these losses have been paid with taxpayers' money. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The prime minister said that he will decide on the yard's future after his return from abroad—that is, after 24 March.

[Begin Ryszard Goluch recording, chairman of the Gdansk Shipyard board] I think that the prime minister's response should be regarded as optimistic. The prime minister has not made the situation final. There is still the possibility for the shipyard to present a plan of action, a credible plan. You could feel that in the prime minister's statement. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The shipyard board intends to carry out radical changes in the organization of work. Among other things, it intends to reduce the number of jobs from 9,000 to 5,000. It is planning to sell some of the grounds. According to the board, as a result of these changes, the shipyard may start making a profit in two years' time.

Poland: Kolodko: Government Not To Save Gdansk Shipyard

LD1803095696 Warsaw Polskie Radio First Program Network in Polish 0800 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the opinion of Deputy Prime Minister [and Finance Minister] Grzegorz Kolodko, market forces decide on the existence of plants or their bankruptcy in a market economy. This is why Gdansk Shipyard cannot count on the government's financial help, Kolodko told Polish Radio today:

[Begin Kolodko recording] If someone is not capable of meeting the demands of the market, the market makes the decision on the matter, not the government; so, if the market makes a decision unfavorable for Gdansk Shipyard, the government will reconcile itself to that decision. Plants are set up, and they sink if they cannot cope, and others take their place. The most important thing is that the people who work there should have work afterwards; and, in this sense, not necessarily the government, but, as I understand it, also local government, the Gdansk provincial governor, trade unionists, in particular, everybody should make it his concern that Gdansk Shipyard employees should find work elsewhere. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Romania: Melescanu Discusses EU, NATO Integration

AU1803133896 Bucharest DIMINEATA in Romanian 7 Mar 96 pp 1, 3

[Part two of a two-part interview with Romanian Foreign Minister Teodor Melescanu by Carmen Radulescu; place and date not given: "Romania's Image Among Business Circles and Political Bodies Is Very Close to Reality"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Radulescu] Mr. Minister Teodor Melescanu, let us talk now about another topical activity, that is, the national strategy of preparation for Romania to join the European Union [EU]. Recently, you chaired in Brussels a session of the Council of Romania-European Union Association....

[Melescanu] It was a great pleasure for me to chair the proceedings of that second council of Romania-European Union association because the main conclusion that we and our partners in the European Union drew was that there has been a very good development in relations between Romania and the European Union since the Association accord of 1 February 1995 came into effect. We are pleased about this because, in reality, this association accord is one of the most important means of ensuring Romania's integration in the euro-atlantic structures and, above all, in the European Union. In fact, it is even mentioned in the foreword of the Association accord that the objective of the two sides is to have the implementation of this "treaty" lead to Romania's integration in the European Union as a member state with equal rights. And, among other things, a fact that has been particularly emphasized by our colleagues in the European Union is that Romania is one of the few candidate that has a clear strategy for joining the European Union. This strategy proceeds from the provisions of the European Union's White Paper and from the decisions adopted in Essen at the highest level on the expansion of the European Union. This strategy derives from a serious analysis of the directions and tactics used in Romania's economic development and in implementing the economic reform and transition in the economic area. At the same time, these things convey a very important message, namely, that of the support that all the political forces give to this strategy. Hence, it was and it is very well assessed that we have a strategy, that we have created certain structures at national level for the implementation of this strategy. I am talking about the Intergovernmental Committee for European Integration, chaired by Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroiu and about the fact that we have set up a special department for European integration led by Secretary of State Gheorghe Prisacaru and a special Interparliamentary committee, that includes representatives of all ministries with special duties in this field. This committee is in charge of standardizing the laws and harmonizing Romanian legislation with the legislation prevailing in the European Union. [passage omitted]

[Radulescu] Thus, Mr. Minister, on what should Romania "put an emphasis" now in order to obtain the "approval" for the candidacy?

[Melescanu] From all the discussions that we held it results that there are two elements that could help us a lot in this process. First of all, the continuation and intensification of efforts to privatize the Romanian economy, and from this point of view I believe that the success of the Government Program bears a special importance. This is an element that will carry a very heavy weight in any evaluation of the Romanian economy. The second element is the restructuring of the Romanian economy by taking into account the demands of the market and the requirements of the Association accord and, I could say, the prospects of Romania's integration in the European Union. So far very much has been accomplished in this area at an institutional level but there is still much to be done. [passage omitted]

One year after the Association accord came into effect, the proportion of Romania's trade with the European Union has exceeded 50 percent of our total trade. This shows how important it is for Romania to establish favorable conditions for access to the markets of the European Union member states.

[Radulescu] Mr. Minister, would you please describe in a few words the national strategy for Romania to join to NATO because we also wish to integrate in that Alliance. In this respect we can recall some very noteworthy actions.

[Melescanu] We have very many actions "in progress" of Romania's participation in various activities, beginning with Romania's participation in the Partnership for Peace, in IFOR [Implementation Force], in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as our participation in the planning cell in Mons (Belgium). There are many specific actions that can already give a very clear idea of Romania's increasingly serious involvement in its relations with NATO. We should also mention the very active and continuously developing relations of cooperation on a bilateral level that the Ministry of National Defense, and Romania in general, has with the armies and military bodies of very important states in NATO. Certainly, I am referring to relations at a military level with the United States, which are among our most active relations. [passage omitted]

We are now entering a stage of very complex dialogue with NATO bodies. This dialogue will help to work out the conclusions that—toward the end of this year—will make the bases for the North Atlantic Alliance's decision regarding its eastward expansion, or better said, with its opening, because what is actually taking place currently is a NATO opening. This represents an opening not only through the idea of including new members but also through the expansion of its activities. I am thinking of the very positive cooperation that exists between the armed forces of the Russian Federation and NATO, the participation of the former in ensuring the military component of the Dayton peace plan etc. [passage omitted]

[Radulescu] Before concluding this "roundup," I would like you, Mr. Minister, to say a few words about how Romania is regarded in the "new world" because here, at home, we feel that no matter what some people say, the Unites States is looking at us with interest.

[Melescanu] There are a few elements that could explain this very positive development of relations between Romania and the United States, which in fact is portrayed very clearly in the two visits that President Ion Iliescu paid to America, the two meetings he held with President Clinton, the very clear messages at the highest level regarding the United States' interest in Romania's continuous advance along the path of democracy and transition to competitive market economy and in Romania's integration in the European and euro-atlantic structures. There could be various explanations in this respect. There is no doubt that one of the reasons for this positive development is the fact that Romania has proved to be a real pole of stability in our area—stability both from a political as well as an economic viewpoint—in a period when what characterized our region was instability, not to say conflicts, and I am certainly thinking, first of all, of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. No doubt that this characteristic of Romania as a factor of stability has played a real positive role. I could add to this also the fact that, in spite of certain quite pessimistic assessments and forecasts, the Romanian economy has moved forward in the past two years and even if the developments are rather modest, they are nevertheless positive developments and reflect a very clear idea about the revival of the Romanian economy. I could say that it is evident that Romania, in four to five years, has consolidated its image as a stable country, which is steadily progressing in a way that clearly shows the direction of democratic and pluralist development and the advance towards a competitive market economy. I might add to all this, without fear of being mistaken, that Romania represents one of the most important markets in this area. And this is an "interesting" element for our partners, including the Americans. I am thinking of the fact that Romania has an extremely interesting geographical position: we are located at the gateway to the Middle East and the former Soviet space. We are located in an important strategic area, controlling the last 1,000 kilometers of the Danube and we are a country with an opening to the Black Sea.

[Radulescu] And at the same time we have an extremely positive human potential. Do you agree with this Mr. Minister?

[Melescanu] This is precisely what I wanted to emphasize. Namely, that we are 23 million consumers but also producers, because Romania is one of the few countries in this area that has very important resources, mainly human but also material resources. There is no doubt that this combination has made Romania an increasingly interesting country. Our image at the level of business circles and at the level of political bodies is obviously very close to reality. However, there continues to be shortfalls at the level of mass media. Here, often it is too difficult to change the particular way things have been perceived or—why should we not say it—there is a certain amount of ill-will or subjectivity involved. These are clichis that start creating difficulties because reality no longer matches those clichis that were promoted before. However, the real evolution has been confirmed by the positive and correct way in which the American businessmen have perceived our country.

[Radulescu] I also noticed it in the United States. The way in which American businessmen perceive things is a real, extremely sensitive barometer....

[Melescanu] That is true. The interest of the American businessmen is based on very precise economic criteria and profit. I have never really met sentimental banking people or businessmen. Hence, we are talking here of a real assessment of the Romanian potential and of the capacity to generate profit. This in fact is one of the essential elements. If we add to this the political stability in Romania, we have a picture that makes Romania an attractive country. And because I do not want to upset anybody I will not say the most attractive country in our region.

[Radulescu] Mr. Minister, thank you very much for the interview.

[Melescanu] It was a pleasure.

Romania: Daily Sees PNTCD Drawing Closer to PDSR

AU1803111496 Bucharest AZI in Romanian 11 Mar 96 p 12

[Editorial by Adrian Patrusca: "The National Peasant Christian Democratic Party Should Give an Answer!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] "Evolutions in the National Peasant Christian Democratic Party [PNTCD]" is one of the latest works of the analysis department of the Social Democracy Party of Romania [PDSR]. The document, which was only drafted for the domestic use of the party leadership, has defied the provisions of the state and secret service and was leaked to our editorial staff, which published it in our newspaper. Three days have passed since its publication in ZIUA and no reaction has come from the PNTCD, despite the fact that the conclusions of that analysis clearly prove, with concrete examples, that the most important opposition party has deviated to the left and is drawing closer to the PDSR. As the press can no longer be accused of subjective perceptions and presentations in this instance, the PNTCD's lack of reaction is quite strange, to say the least. Therefore, we will consider this exceptional document.

The anonymous PDSR analyst must have been overtaken by immense joy when he anatomized the latest developments in the PNTCD camp. What did he note while reading through the PNTCD political program adopted at the latest congress? That the main opposition party and the main government party are closer to each other than they thought and that fundamental and incredible changes have occurred in the PNTCD position. The anonymous analyst is probably thrilled to see that the PNTCD speaks out for merging the small agricultural holdings in "as few associations" as possible. But then, Iliescu has been incessantly calling for precisely that for the past six years, thus incurring the wrath of the opposition, particularly of the PNTCD until now. The head of state was accused at the time of wanting to revive the agricultural production cooperatives. Today, the PNTCD people are plagiarizing the Cotroceni [presidential] Palace.

Like the PDSR, the analyst notes, the PNTCD is trying to place itself in the middle of the political landscape, in an attempt to draw as many votes as possible from both left and right. The vote-gathering machine is turned on so strongly that the PNTCD, like the PDSR, are making promises in all directions so as to bait the people to their camps. Therefore, it is no wonder that both parties are promising about the same things. In order to fulfill their promises under the elections, nothing seems more natural than a joint government.

Here we have reached a cardinal point. The vigilant eye of the analyst notes that, by copying the PDSR model, the PNTCD has also begun to refuse any cooperation with those who should have been its natural allies. The PDSR is divorcing from the left, while the PNTCD has broken up the engagements with the right. We are seeing our political landscape acquiring a kind of sameness, devoid of asperity. The PNTCD is moving away from the "Coposu [Corneliu Coposu, recently deceased former leader of the PNTCD] line," the analyst notes, thanks to the new guard, which has penetrated the party's leadership structures. The conspicuous avoidance of the monarchy issue at the latest PNTCD congress and afterward is the most telling proof along these lines, upon which the PDSR analysis stubbornly dwells .

Electoral tactics as a likely explanation for the toning down of the monarchy issue does not stand. If the PNTCD were to bring up, after the elections, the issue of the king's return to the throne, that would entail severe punishment from the republican electorate, which would feel profoundly deceived. Such a stratagem might prove suicidal for the PNTCD. Therefore, it seems that the king has been deserted by the PNTCD for a long time to come, maybe for ever.

The departure from the "Coposu line" and the drawing closer to the PDSR are the two main themes of the analysis. The solid arguments on which they are based were presented in detail in a previous issue of this daily. Now, for lack of space, I only point out a few. However, if they are true, then they foresee a spectacular change on the Romanian political scene. Therefore, the PNTCD must break its silence. It should combat these arguments, if it can, with equally solid arguments. If not, then it should honestly warn its faithful electorate of the party's new line. In both cases, the PNTCD should given an answer!

Romania: Conflict Between UDMR's Marko, Tokes Reported

AU1803134196 Bucharest ZIUA in Romanian 11 Mar 96 p 11

[Report by Cristina Zarnescu and Dorina Baesu: "The Factions Within the UDMR at Loggerheads"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The ethnic Hungarian population, as well as the press expected the [9-10 March] meeting of the UDMR [Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania] Council of representatives, held in the town of Miercurea Ciuc, to clear up the conflict, more acute than ever, between the "moderates" and the "radicals" within that party. The former, namely [UDMR President] Bela Marko and Laszlo Borbely, respectively the latter, that is, [UDMR Honorary President] Laszlo Tokes and Geza Szocs, the leaders of the two opposing wings were watched closely by everyone present at the meeting, as they expected the scandal to break out any minute.

They discussed the cases of Laszlo Borbely and Geza Szocs. The Tokes wing protested Bela Marko's decision to appoint Laszlo Borbely as his personal representative in charge of relations with the other political parties, while Geza Szocs's appointment by the FIDESZ [Federation of Young Democrats, a party in Hungary] as its representative in the administration board of the DUNA television company made Marko and his supporters angry. Tokes considers that Laszlo Borbely is not the appropriate person to do the job he was offered because he cannot make the UDMR members stand united, but on the contrary, he would rather cause a split. In the UDMR honorary president's opinion, Borbely tends to grant concessions to the rulers of the country, which is intolerable for a party such as the UDMR.

In their speeches the two presidents quoted from the letters they had previously sent each other on this issue.

Romania: Deputies Endorse Decision on Parliamentary Budget

AU1903092896 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Chamber of Deputies has endorsed in today's plenary session the draft decision regarding its income and expenditure budget for 1996. The draft envisages a 54.4 billion lei cut in the budget by introducing a severe savings system in all areas of budgetary expenses, without essentially affecting the legislative activity of the Chamber or the deputies.

The budget of the Chamber of Deputies for 1996, financed from the state budget, has been set at 67.3 billion lei. To complete the allotment for the activity of deputies in electoral districts, the draft envisages releasing some funds from other parliamentary activities. The sums envisaged for investment objectives will be used to complete the meeting hall of the Chamber of Deputies and of the library in the Parliament Palace.

Romania: Five Banks Banned From Hard-Currency Transactions

AU1903093596 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2000 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Bank of Romania [BNR] has forbidden five major commercial banks from carrying out transactions among themselves in hard currency. The banks subject to this interdiction are the following: Dacia Felix, Credit Bank, Banc Coop., Columna Bank, and Ing Bank. According to official sources cited by ASSOCIATED PRESS [AP], the reason for this decision is to halt illegal speculation, which has a negative impact on attracting foreign investors.

The BNR has decided that these five banks will be allowed to operate in hard currency only as brokers for their clients. A BNR spokesman told AP, as quoted by ROMPRES, that the five banks were subject to this interdiction because they had failed to fulfill the criteria recently established by the BNR.

Federal

Federal: Army Gen Kovacevic Calls For 'Powerful Army'

LD1803173996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1719 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, Mar 18 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Army General Sava Kovacevic said Monday [18 March] Yugoslavia's option for peace was not sufficient for peace to be preserved in unfavorable military-political circumstances.

Gen. Kovacevic, deputy chief of Yugoslav military schools, attended an official academy in Belgrade which marked the day of military schooling.

He said a powerful army with modern equipment must be built at a time of economic difficulties and duly oriented to preserving the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Causes of new armed conflicts will not be removed by reducing the military potential of the Yugoslav Army or the armies of neighboring states, Gen. Kovacevic said, adding that they would disappear only if the forces of peace prevailed in the region, democratic development began, technological progress, moral and cultural renewal. [sentence as received]

The ceremony was also attended by Chief of General Staff of the Yugoslav Army Gen. Momcilo Perisic.

Federal: Parliament Official Meets Russian Ambassador

LD1803191796 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1619 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 18 (TANJUG)—Speaker of the Chamber of Citizens (lower house) of the Yugoslav Parliament, Dr Radoman Bozovic, and the newly-appointed ambassador of the Russian Federation to the FRY, Jurij Kotov, stated in Belgrade Monday [18 March] the readiness of the two countries to further promote the traditionaly good and stable relations.

Ambassador Kotov emphasized there was a consensus of all political forces in the Russian Federation about the necessity to develop bilateral relations with the FRY, the information service of the Yugoslav parliament said.

Kotov also stressed that Russia was committed to the complete lifting of sanctions against Yugoslavia, which were suspended last November, and that it becomes member, on an equal footing, of all international institutions as soon as possible.

The two also discussed the upcoming ministerial meeting between the contact group and the representatives of the FRY, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in Moscow on March 23.

The Yugoslav official accepted an invitation, conveyed by Ambassador Kotov, to visit Moscow soon.

Federal: Talks Begin With Hungary on Economic Cooperation

LD1803190996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1650 GMT 18 Mar 96

["Ecopool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 18 (TANJUG)—Serbian Minister of Industry Oskar Fodor has said that 11,000 Yugoslav firms are currently present on the Hungarian market.

Fodor said this at a two-day meeting of Yugoslav and Hungarian economists which opened in Belgrade on Monday [18 March]. The participants are representatives of the chemical and metallurgical industries.

Fodor said that one of the explanations for such wide presence of Yugoslav firms on the Hungarian market was the fact that Hungary had not introduced visa requirements for Yugoslav nationals during the three-and-a-half-year period of economic blockade.

Yugoslavia and Hungary suffered huge losses under the regime of international sanctions and they should now work together to make up for it, Fodor said.

Hungarian Minister of Industry and Trade Imre Dunai informed the participants about economic changes in Hungary over the past several-year period, primarily in the area of privatization, inflow of foreign capital and the structure of foreign trade.

The Hungarian side was informed about a liberalization of the Yugoslav foreign trade legislation and better conditions for foreign investments.

Federal: Foreign Investment Termed 'Indispensable'

LD1803170996 Belgrade TANJUG in English 1356 GMT 18 Mar 96

["Ecopool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Belgrade, March 18 (TANJUG)—Foreign investments are indispensable in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in order to create new jobs, secure new markets and introduce new technologies, Deputy Director of the Institute for International Policy and Economy Dr Vladimir Grecic said Monday.

In a statement to TANJUG, Grecic said that the law on foreign investments in the FRY was sufficiently attractive for foreigners, and that the government of Yugoslavia was attaching special importance to investment protection.

Yugoslavia is very attractive for investments due to its geostrategic position, its outlet to the sea, the Danube, a network of international communication lines, relatively well developed infrastructure, skilled man power and rich natural resources, Grecic said.

Under the law on foreign investments from 1994, investors are able to import equipment exempt of customs duties and taxes. The tax laws of the Republics of Serbia and of Montenegro offer additional facilities to investors.

Foreigners have the right to invest in banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions, in firms and in free trade zones. There are no limitations as to the transfer of profit or repatriation of investments.

Foreign capital investments would accelerate the development of the country, the economist assessed and pointed to the importance of direct foreign investments, primarily in the private sector, the inflow of foreign currency remittances sent by Yugoslav workers employed abroad and the return of capital that 'fled' during the period of economic sanctions.

For greater foreign investments it would be necessary, among other things, to achieve a high degree of economic stability in the country, and statistics are clearly indicating a growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the FRY, Grecic said.

Serbia

Serbia: Milosevic Meets Head of U.S. Negotiating Team

LD1803175196 Belgrade TANJUG Domestic Service in Serbo-Croatian 1738 GMT 18 Mar 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Geneva, 18 Mar (TANJUG)—Immediately upon his arrival in Geneva this morning Slobodan Milosevic, president of the Republic of Serbia, received John Kornblum, assistant U.S. secretary of state and head of the U.S. negotiating team for Former Yugoslavia, and his aide Rudolf Perina.

The talks focused on the efforts to speed up implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

Milosevic and Kornblum particularly discussed bilateral issues of interest to the United States and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia's role in the overall process of the stabilization in the crisis area [Bosnia] was highly appreciated during the talks. Both sides said that they expected further efforts aimed at securing full implementation of the Dayton Agreement.

Particular attention was devoted to concrete issues related to the regulation of civilian aspects of the Dayton Agreement.

The talks were attended by Nikola Koljevic, vice president of the Serb Republic, and Zivadin Jovanovic, assistant federal [Yugoslav] foreign minister.

Serbia: Party Leaders Discuss Status of Vojvodina

96BA0154C Belgrade NIN in Serbo-Croatian 26 Jan 96 pp 16-17

[Article by Petar Ignja: "Autonomous Autonomies of Autonomies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] *Vuk Draskovic, Vojislav Seselj, Zoran Djindjic, Vojislav Kostunica, and Dragoslav Petrovic talk about the status of the northern province of Serbia. But Crnjanski also has something to say.*

The well-known Novi Sad reporter Dusko Bogdanovic begins his new book, *Petak za Petkom [Friday After Friday]*, with the sentence: "Novi Sad really does not exist." Another reporter, Dimitrije Boarov (I hear), writes that there isn't even a Vojvodina any more. It was sold at auction!

We recently wrote what Dragan Veselinov, Mile Isakov, Nenad Canak, and other signers of the "Manifest za Autonomnu Vojvodinu" [Manifest for Autonomous Vojvodina] think about their Vojvodina fate. They are now called new "autonomians." They are lucky. Not long ago they would have been called counterrevolutionaries.

It is interesting that no one in the government has referred to their sharp criticism directed at centralist Serbia, especially when the topic is economic robbery, and the opposition hasn't reacted either (the radicals said something through clenched teeth and Serbian Democrats something barely more, having expressed their disagreement). We are speaking today with the leaders of the largest opposition parties, who think the same about the ruling regime as the new autonomians, and we are trying to learn whether some party will find itself on the side of the signers of the Manifest, or if everyone will go his own way.

Alive but Numb

Here is what Vojislav Seselj says, in his style:

"It is not serious of large political parties to seek statements about the activities of small, meaningless parliamentary parties. Under our law, every group of 100 madmen can form a party. The smaller the party, the larger the manifests. I don't intend to comment on what those are doing who cannot gather even 5 percent of the votes at elections."

Serious or not serious, we reporters must earn a slice of bread, I say to Seselj. He agreed.

Vuk Draskovic begins his statement solemnly, like Stevan Supljikac in Sremski Karlovci in 1848.

"Where is Vojvodina now? It's alive if numb to us, but it won't die... To the shame of the current government in Belgrade. Vojvodina has been reduced to a spiritual province and a huge property under forced administration, on whose profits the police and party apparatus of the forced administration are mainly holding out and providing wretched social peace in Serbia. The Serbian Renewal Movement is for the economic, political, personal, cultural, and ethnic independence of Vojvodina, which will be, economically and politically and culturally and ethnically, a permanent part of Serbia.

"But, only Vojvodina does not stand Belgrade centralism. Everything in Serbia is under the command of Belgrade, one man, and several of his closest associates."

The Hungarians Are Silent

"The traditional Vojvodina regions are Srem, Banat, and Backa. A high level of local self-administration of districts within the framework of regions and the province Assembly, as a roof above the local and regional self-administration, is the political, economic, and cultural program for Vojvodina, which the Serbian Renewal Movement represents," says its president.

Does Vuk know that the Hungarians have already been trying for several years to seek, just for themselves, personal autonomy? How wouldn't he know... Yes, they are stubbornly seeking their autonomy, as in the Tirol, Pal Sandor has the custom of saying. They are not changing the word "Vojvodina." They call it—Serbian jobs. Every movement for an autonomous Vojvodina seems to Hungarians to make their goal more distant, and they should get personal autonomy from the ruling Serbian regime, not from the province, so they are careful, as if walking on eggs, about what they will say in applying for an autonomous Vojvodina. They have decided that it is best to remain silent. And remain silent.

If Vojvodina got real autonomy, and it was autonomy in the state of Serbia, the Hungarians know that they would then, in their nine autonomous northern Backa districts, have to be autonomy in autonomy. And how far could one go, in this way, with these autonomies? Indefinitely. Let's say that the Croats also seek autonomy in the autonomy of autonomy. And the Ruthenians, autonomy in autonomy of the autonomies of autonomy. And the Bunjevci, autonomy in the autonomy of autonomies in the autonomies of autonomy.

And there are also Chinese in Vojvodina.

"The Serbian Renewal Movement believes that the rights of ethnic minorities are a mirror of the majority people. If the civil, national, religious, and cultural rights of ethnic minorities are limited, then the Serbian people, as the majority, are shaming themselves both before the world and before themselves," Vuk will say.

Precisely because of this view, he is not for either territorial or cultural partitions between Serbs and other peoples in Vojvodina. He wants the province Assembly, government, and other organs, along with the broadest local autonomy, to organize all economic, cultural, and judicial flows in Vojvodina, with one limitation: that neither the territorial nor the constitutional sovereignty of Serbia put the decisions of local, regional, and province organs in doubt.

Vuk emphasizes that there is no Vojvodina outside Serbia and no Serbia outside Vojvodina. He mentioned those national-fascist slogans about a pure Serbian Vojvodina, and he didn't forget that swearing of Hungarians in the republic parliament, which passed unpunished. Shame.

In three words, plus a conjunction, Zorna Djindjiz sublimated the autonomy of Vojvodina: Better less but really.

"The authors of attempts so far to redefine the autonomy of Vojvodina, including the last one, have fallen, as a rule, into the trap of standardization. They are attempting to change the evidently poor position of Vojvodina through changes in authority. They believe that life in the northern province would immediately change for the better if this province got some, or even all, of the authority that now belongs to the republic. This expectation is naive. Who guarantees that this newly acquired authority would be used in the interests of Vojvodina and not in the interests of a handful of people in power, as is the case in Serbia. What political majority would administer such a Vojvodina? Judging by the results of all multiparty elections up to now, it would be a majority of Socialists and Radicals. Neither of these two parties can be considered an adherent of decentralization and local self-administration. In a word, if the concept of total autonomy prevailed in such a case, we would get another centralized ministate. Southern Banat, then northern Backa, would probably fight for autonomy in it. And so on indefinitely," Djindjic says.

Right as a Privilege

The president of the Democrats thinks the solution lies rather in details, and not in pretentious constitutional constructions. Since the basic problem of Vojvodina is the fact that its citizens cannot independently handle their money, Djindjic continues, and their resources also (to the extent that is customary in the world), that percentage of revenues realized which remains for the free management of districts or the province should be strictly determined.

"The Democratic Party sees the solution for Vojvodina in a two-step process. On the one hand, firm integration of state area through introduction of market principles and a legal state. On the other, consistent decentralization, according to the principle that everyone handles a significant portion of the money that he has earned, because he who was able to earn the money can utilize it best," says the president of the Democratic Party.

There is no end to the conversation, and the news arrives that the harvest in Vojvodina never failed as it did this fall. There will be hungry people, gentlemen. There is no fertilizer, there is no fuel, there is no money... And if there were, does it pay to plow, to hoe, when an ordinary coffee in a cafe is worth 20 kg of grain. For one beer in these tin cans (with two tables and three chairs) you have to give 50 kg of wheat! For whom did you vote, Messrs. peasants?

Calmly, as if we were used to it, Vojislav Kostunica says:

"All those who seek greater or absolute rights for two autonomous provinces start with similar assumptions. Regardless of whether the requests from critics of the existing situation come from Novi Sad or Pristina, they have something in common. They start with the view that the right to creating autonomy is a special and not a general right. They all consider that only one part of Serbia—Kosovo and Vojvodina—should have this special right and the rest of Serbia does not interest them. The critics basically agree with official Belgrade: For all of them, demands for autonomy remain within the borders of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Where they do not agree with the current regime is whether the rights of two autonomies should be extended or, as Milosevic would like—everything should remain within the framework of his constitutional triumph of 1989. Socialists would like to maintain the existing constitutional resolution, and his critics to change the constitution as much as is necessary for the rights of the two autonomies to be broadened. The constitutional structure of Serbia does not interest them, except that part that limits the rights of one or the other autonomy. Like the Socialists, they are also interested in the broadening of their own power, and not the broadening of democracy," Kostunica says.

The president of the Democratic Party of Serbia asked that we do not abbreviate his statement. That is difficult, in today's times, when there is no newsprint, but a word is a word (and if it is a little shorter, a fingernail's worth, no more, I believe there won't be any anger). He says that the demands for the broadening of autonomy in Vojvodina are twofold and self-contradictory. Serbian or Vojvodinan demands are directed toward the territorialization of rights to autonomy, and demands of the minority; primarily the Hungarians go more toward the personalization of rights to autonomy (everything is "simpler" in Kosovo, since the Albanians are seeking an independent Kosovo, or state).

The Fate of Laza P. Gagic

"Foreign political demands that the question of autonomy, primarily of Kosovo, be opened, are more than is known—in Dayton they were only renewed—and because of all this the questions of Kosovo and Vojvodina can be resolved, conditionally said, in two ways; the first is nondemocratic and partial, the second is democratic and all-encompassing. The first way should not even be described, if it is said that it represents a reprise of Dayton: a change in the Constitution of Serbia outside Serbia. The second method, democratic and all-encompassing, would presuppose adoption of a new constitution by the citizens. Under it, all of Serbia, not only Kosovo and Vojvodina, could be constituted as a state of the region in the standard Western European sense of the word. The government in Serbia is decentralizing through regionalization, but more than that too—Serbia is democratizing. All constitutional resolutions up to now have been only a source of separatism and dissatisfaction in the two autonomous provinces, as well as in the greater part of Serbia, which has remained directly under central authority," Kostunica says.

President of the Vojvodinan reformers Dragoslav Petrovic considers that Vojvodina is, above all, an integral part of Serbia and that it should remain so. He says that the modern autonomy of Vojvodina should not even be tied to one current legal status, but to European experience and the needs of the citizens of Vojvodina and the state as a whole.

Good. Now theory—fall out! It will be as Dad says. Even if it isn't valid, it'll be that way.

People who complain that they have it hard, and are certain that it comes from Belgrade, say that Serbia, back in its first days of being united, looked upon Vojvodina as its colony. The love of the citizens of Banat for Serbia, after the union, was great. The Radicals and Democrats were voted for, and they raised Pasic to the sky. And all with the idea of eating and drinking better. What will change Banat's picture of Belgrade, and cool it off, will be taxes. Taxes, huge taxes. "A horseman comes into a village and, like a Turk, seeks a tax. There is no note, no correct books, written names, each in his place, for example, Laza Gagic paid 34 forints and 5 filirs, and a stamp, and a signature, and again a stamp, and again a signature, and peace to the last ear of corn. Now Laza P. Gagic (hey, what is that P.?) goes out more often to the district, and one day they request 2,000 dinars, the second day 3, the third 4, when how... Yes, but Laza P. Gagic has only 500 dinars, tied to the drawstring of his pants. And good, give those 500 for now, we'll easily manage the rest. And without seal and signature, and again without seal and signature."

This was written, 70 years ago, in POLITIKA by none other than Milos Crnjanski, in reporting under the title "O Dolovu, Selu Flamandskome" [About Dolovo, Flemish Village].

And do you know what happened next? After two weeks they again summoned Laza P. Gagic. They forgot the tax on Begej. After three weeks they call again. They forgot to charge a tax on the hospital. After another week they call again: It's not 200 dinars surtax, it's 250, and let him prove that he paid for Begej. Yes, prove that he paid, because they cannot find where Laza P. Gagic is registered...

Kosovo

Kosovo: Serbs Detain Human Rights Activist, Seize Evidence

AU1503210796 Paris AFP in English
2051 GMT 15 Mar 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pristina, Serbia, March 15 (AFP)—Serbian police on Friday [15 March] detained Kosovo writer and activist Adem Demaci and confiscated documentation on human rights abuses he had planned to present to the European parliament, the writer told AFP.

Demaci, president of the Kosovo human rights committee, said he was held up by police at the border between the predominantly ethnic Albanian province of Kosovo, southern Serbia, and Macedonia.

After holding him for nearly two hours, the border police confiscated documentation he had intended to present to the European Parliament. Demaci said it included video cassettes and other "witness statements by Kosvo Albanians on the violence suffered at the hand of the (Serbian) police."

The writer spoke to AFP by telephone from Skopje, where he had expected to set off for Brussels at the invitation of the European Parliament to testify on the human rights situation in Kosovo.

Demaci, 60, winner of the Sakharov peace prize, had spent a total of 28 years in prison for his campaign for the merging of Kosovo into Albania before his release from jail in 1990.

In 1989 Belgrade withdrew the autonomous status of Kosovo, which has a 90 percent ethnic Albanian majority, and brought the province under full central control.

Vojvodina

Vojvodina: Minister on National Minorities' Rights

LD1603185496 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1830 GMT 16 Mar 96

["Pool" item]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ruski Krstur, Serbia, March 16 (TANJUG)—Yugoslav Federal Minister Margit Savovic said on Saturday [16 March] that national minorities are not denied any rights in Yugoslavia and there is even a tendency to expand their rights.

The Ruthanian Literary and Publishing Society has done a lot for the development of Ruthanian national culture and the confirmation of its national identity while at the same time spreading the truth about Yugoslavia, Savovic said at the society's election assembly in Ruski Krstur, in northern Vojvodina.

The Ruthanians make up about one percent of the plus two million population of Serbia's northern province.

The Vojvodina secretary for national minority rights Pavel Domonji stressed that all national institutions represent Yugoslavia's wealth.

He said that big progress has been made in Vojvodina and Yugoslavia in safeguarding national identity and set out that despite all the difficulties not a single cultural event held by national minorities has ceased to be organised.

There are over 20 national minorities living in Vojvodina.

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